RITUAL

IN CATHOLIC WORSHIP

BY FATHER PROCTER

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BENZIGER BROTHERS

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Julia M. Hopkins

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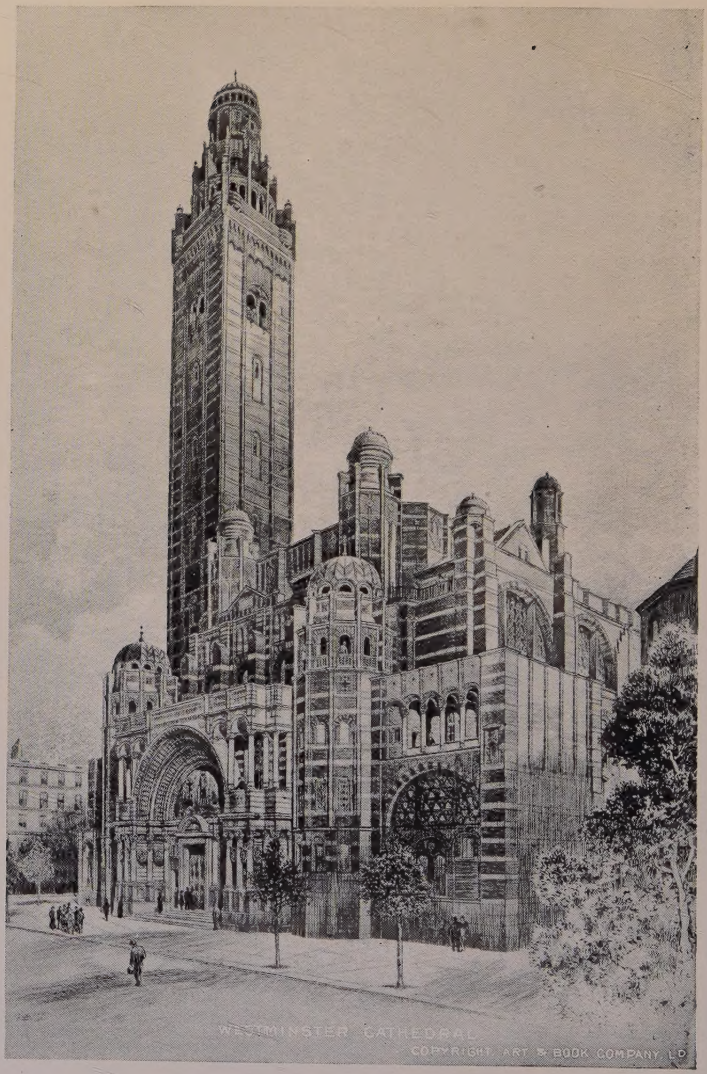
WESTMINSTER CATHEDRAL
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RITUAL

IN CATHOLIC WORSHIP

SERMONS

Preached in Westminster Cathedral
during the Lent of 1904

BY THE

Very Rev. FATHER PROCTOR

Master in Sacred Theology, Ex-Provincial of the English Dominicans

NEW YORK, CINCINNATI, CHICAGO

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1907

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PREFACE

HAVING been asked to print a small *brochure* on the subject of Catholic Ceremonial, I have endeavoured in the following pages to reproduce, as accurately as possible, from copious notes taken before and revised after delivery, a series of five sermons preached in Westminster Cathedral during the Lent of 1904.

J. P.

Acc 5614

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RITUAL IN CATHOLIC WORSHIP

I

The Use and Abuse of Ritual

All that belongeth to the rites of the God of heaven, let it be given diligently in the house of the God of heaven.—1 *Esdras* vii, 23.

THE subject on which I propose to speak to you on these Sundays in Lent is one suggested by the newness, the vastness and the embryonic beauty of this glorious cathedral church. Being the first course of sermons preached within its walls, it is natural that our thoughts should be drawn to its object, its purpose, its design, its promise—in a word, its apostolate to men. This vast building is intended to be a centre of ritualistic worship. It is not a mere parochial church. It is more even than a collegiate church. It is a cathedral. Nay, it is something above and beyond this. It is the metropolitan cathedral of England; it is to be the pattern cathedral of the cathedrals of the land.

Here, if anywhere, we have a right to expect that the liturgical services of the Catholic Church will be carried out, as far as circumstances will allow, in all their expressive and impressive beauty. The daily Mass not merely said but sung; the Divine Office chorally chanted "seven times each day," as often as the Psalmist "gave praise to God";* the various rites and ceremonies of the Church, according to the different seasons of the ecclesiastical year and the ever-recurring festivals of the Catholic calendar; the Ordination service at stated times; the sacramental

*Ps. cviii, 164.

rite of Confirmation; the graceful processions in seasons of gladness; the sombre requiem on days of sadness. All these are to make the history of this place. This, I take it, is the *raison d'être*, the ultimate justification of the Cathedral of Westminster.

A church like this, a vast cathedral, is in itself part of the ritual of the Catholic Church. It is a "sermon in stone." It is a voice crying out in the spiritual wilderness of London. It preaches as did Jonas in Ninive, as did Elias on Carmel, as did the Baptist on the banks of a river other than the Thames, as did Peter in Jerusalem, as did Paul in Athens, as did Jesus in Galilee. The subject of the sermon preached with such incomparable and uncompromising eloquence is, Ritual, or the exterior worship of God. How eloquent the voice of the cathedral! God grant that it may be heard above the din and turmoil and bustle of the city. Its lofty campanile points to heaven, and cries out above the whir of wheels and the hum of voices: *Sursum corda*, "Lift up your hearts." God grant that many a passer-by, as he lifts up his eyes may lift up his heart and respond: *Habemus ad Dominum*, "We have lifted them up to the Lord." If so, *Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro*, "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God." For *Dignum et justum est; vere dignum et justum est*, "It is meet and just; truly meet and truly just that we should always and everywhere, even in the streets of the crowded city, give thanks to God." Its graceful façade, with the suggestive inscription, speaks of the hope of redemption. God grant that as Mary of Egypt after her seventeen years of sin was won to forty years of sorrow and penance, as she gazed upon the statue of the Immaculate Mary in front of the church of Jerusalem, so many a wayward child may be drawn to the Father by the picture of the Redeemer who was Mary's Son! The ever-open door seems to say, "Come, let us fall down before the Lord that made us." God grant that they who come

to scoff may remain to pray, that others who enter out of curiosity may re-enter out of devotion! The spacious nave, the ample aisles, the vast transepts, tell of the many mansions in the Father's house above, and of the home here on earth in the ample fold of Catholic unity. The cross, the sign of redemption, hanging between guilty earth and offended heaven, is the message of the Redeemer to all who would be redeemed. The altar and the sanctuary, the collateral chapels with their respective minor altars, which as humble courtiers surround the great throne, all speak of God's wondrous love for men. The ministers in the sanctuary, the priests at the altar, the singers in the choir—all, like the angels on the ladder of Jacob's vision, ascend and descend carrying our messages to God and God's messages to us; all tell us of God, and remind God of us His children kneeling before His throne. This is the lesson of the cathedral. This is the "sermon in stone." This the symbolism of the material Church.

2. Not to appreciate all this—the beauty of a Catholic Church, the glory of Catholic ritual—is to be ignorant of its hidden meaning. I can understand the anti-ritualistic cry of WHY? I can understand why people who know nothing of Catholic symbolism, asked themselves and asked each other, some few years ago, as they saw this great building rising above the ground, like a monster exotic growth foreign to our country and age, "Why are Catholics building this colossal temple at Westminster, not in the midst of a large Catholic population, but in the throbbing heart, in the pulsating centre of busy commercial London? Why are they erecting this great lofty tower, a landmark amongst landmarks, a giant which dwarfs even giants? Are they emulating the fruitless efforts at Babel? Are they, vainly and vaingloriously, trying to reach heaven and so perpetuate their name? *Manhu?* What does it mean?" And now, to-day, when they enter this great centre of Catholic life,

this spiritual hive of religious activity, I can understand their Judas cry of "*Ut quid perditio hæc?*" Why this waste of brick and stone, of marble and precious metal? Why this glorious sanctuary—*itself as large as many a church*—empty as yet and void, but rich in wondrous potentiality? Why this splendid nave? these transepts? these graceful side chapels with their promise of further lavish expenditure in altars, in carvings and groinings, in mosaic and painting and sculpture, in metals that are costly and stones that are rare? *Manhu?* What does it mean? Why these canons and prebends and ministers, gathered around the altar, clothed in robes that are strange and unearthly? Why this choir of singers, from whose voices, trained and skilled, there come to us notes so melodious and yet so unworldly, because they are of an older world—so different in fact from the music of the hour and the day?

We can understand once more, and we can sympathize with, the astonishment of a visitor, a stranger to our rites and ceremonies, when on a morning like this he visits this church, and witnesses that which to us is nothing notable because nothing new. What can it all mean? he asks; and he waits for a reply, which, perhaps, never comes. It must have a meaning. These bishops and priests in the sanctuary, these singers and choristers in the choir, these lay-folk who look on in devout sympathy, are reasonable men. He knows them outside their churches as shrewd men and women of the world—keen in business, clear-headed in politics, skilled in arts, learned in science, politically and socially on a level with their time. What, then, are they doing? What does it all mean? He notices that as people enter, they bend their knees and bow their heads, and remain as in silent prayer. He turns his eyes to the altar, and he sees candles burning in bright midday, and a lamp which, he is told, is never allowed to be extinguished.

He hears the organ peal forth. Then the voices are raised, and his ear becomes the channel of enchanting sounds which are carried on the wings of the wind, and are borne to his very soul. Now the music is sad and moves him to sorrow for sin; now it is glad and stirs the inmost depth of his soul to joy; now it is grave, and makes him think thoughts which he never, perhaps, thought before. He watches the procession as it wends its way from sacristy to sanctuary, with cross, and lights, and censer, and a white-robed army, and priests and ministers in gorgeous attire. What does it mean? *Manhu?* Then they go through a ceremonial which is strange and weird —they bow their heads, they bend their knees; they sit, they kneel, they stand; they sing in a strange tongue words which are unfamiliar to his ear; the incense is wafted, and the air is laden with the fragrance of the Eastern perfume. What does it—what can it mean? *Manhu?*

In a word, what is the secret of Catholic ceremonial—of glorious churches beautifully adorned, of the costly altar, of the jewelled vessels of silver and gold, of the graceful processions, the mysterious ceremonies which seem so strange, to the man of today so old-worldish, and to the matter-of-fact, practical man so far away? We know the answer. To us it is familiar indeed. Catholic ritual is a telling sermon, more convincing than the words of eloquent men. It is a sublime act—external if you will—of the worship of the living God. It is a bond of union between the creature and God the Creator.

Ceremonial, as practised in the Catholic Church, rests upon three principles which the sceptic cannot doubt, and the incredulous cannot gainsay.

(1) The body as well as the soul comes from God. As the mother of whom we read in the second book of Maccabees (vii) said to her seven sons, when exhorting them to die rather than to go counter to the traditions of their fathers, "I know not how you were

formed in my womb; for I neither gave you breath, nor soul, nor life; neither did I frame the limbs of any of you. But God who rules the nativity of men, and that found out the origin of all." The body is from God, even as is the soul. To God, then, we owe not only the service of the mind and the love of the heart, but the worship of bodily limb, the devotion of bodily sense.

(2) It is through the bodily senses—the eye, the ear and the rest of the five—that we reach the heart and the mind of man, to instruct him, to move him to sorrow, or joy, or love. Hence, in her ritual, the Church appeals *through the senses* to the souls of her children.

(3) "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. The world, and all that dwell therein."* To God, then, we offer earth's gifts as earth's tribute to its Maker. We offer stone from the rock, marble from the quarry, flowers from the garden, wood from the forest, incense from the tree. Everything that is comes from God, everything belongs to Him—from the cherub and the bright seraph in heaven, to the grain of dust on earth, the water drop in the ocean, the leaf on the tree, the tiny pebble in the rippling brook. It is for us to dedicate them and consecrate them to His service from whom they come. *Infimum supremi attingit supremum infimi*—the highest point of a lower order touches the lowest point of the higher. Man is the highest point in the lower creation; he is "but little lower then the angels . . . crowned with glory and honour."† He is the link in the chain of creation which connects God's heaven with this lower world. Through man, then, in his external or ritualistic worship, the things of earth are offered to the God of heaven. He lifts them up from earth; he breathes into them the soul of religion and makes them live; he then unites them to God above.

* Ps. xxiii, 1. † Ps. viii, 6.

I shall hope on another occasion to dwell upon the *rationale*, or reasonableness, of external worship, as deduced from the three principles which, as I have said, are the secret of our outward cult of God. Let me simply, for the moment, remind you that we have high authority for what we say and do—the authority of God's word in the Old Testament and in the New, and the authority of God's action when He lived on the earth as man amongst men.

In the eternity of God when "the Word was with God and was God"—i.e., in the bosom of eternity—the actions of the divine Word were *ad intra*, as the schoolmen express it, or *immanent*, as modern theologians say. The divine procession of Son from Father, and of Holy Ghost from Father and Son, were not seen. The divine operations are invisible to the eyes of men. Even in His external works—as in creation—God hides Himself behind His works, and He Himself is not seen except in shadow or in reflection. "No man can see Me and live."* But when "the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us," when, in human form, He "was seen upon earth and conversed with men,"† *then* is He, in the use of ritual, our model and our guide, even as in our Creed He is our infallible teacher.

We read of Him in the Gospel that He, as Man, did all and more than you have seen His ministers do in the sanctuary this morning. He "fell flat on the ground."‡ He knelt in prayer.§ He prayed, as they have done, in the words of the psalms.‖ He lifted up His voice.¶ He raised His eyes to heaven.** He joined in the singing of a hymn.†† He commanded gifts to be offered in the service of God.‡‡ He frequented the synagogue, the church of those days. He preached in it, read in it, prayed in it.§§ He joined in a procession, and of it He was the

* Exod. xxxiii, 20.
† Bar. iii, 38.
‡ Mark xiv, 35.
§ Luke xxii, 41.
‖ Mark xv, 34.
¶ Mark xiv, 26.
** Mark vi, 14.
†† Matt. xxvi, 30.
‡‡ Matt. viii, 4.
§§ John xviii, 20.

central figure.* Then he allowed Peter to fall at His feet,† and the lepers to fall on their faces before Him,‡ and also the man born blind.§ Once more, we read in the Sacred Books of other processions, of incense, of lights and candles, of gifts of gold and gifts of silver, of gorgeous churches, of priestly vestments, of external visible rites.

Of these venerable forms of external worship Christ Himself says that He came, not to destroy, but to fulfil them. He Himself sanctioned by His presence these rites which God had ordained, in their minutest detail, under the law of promise. Can we be wrong in following that which He approved and prescribed, that which was the common practice of God's chosen people, that which the Church of Christ has taken up and consecrated and handed down to us, that which the centuries have held in veneration, that which is the common practice of Christians in all lands to-day?

3. There is danger, I know, in the use of ritual. No, I am wrong. The danger is in the *abuse*. But is this a reason why we should not use it with prudence, with devotion, with love? Men abuse everything. They are, for the most part, votaries of extremes. They eat gluttonously; they drink to excess; they talk too much; they sleep longer than is good for them; they waste time in excess of recreation; they are extravagant in dress; they are immoderate in their card-playing, their money-spending, their pleasure-seeking. Is this a reason why we should not eat and drink moderately, and talk in reason, and dress with propriety, and sleep as nature demands, and take our innocent rest and health-giving pleasures? Men have worshipped the sun, the moon, the stars. This did not prevent the Psalmist in the *Benedicite* and *Laudate* Psalms from calling upon these creatures of God to praise and exalt their Maker. Neither need it prevent us from admiring

* John xii. † Luke xv, 8. ‡ Luke v, 12. § John ix, 38.

and making use of these gifts of God to the world—the sun which gives us light and heat, the moon which brightens our path by night, the stars which turn night into day, the heavens which "declare the glory of God," and "the firmament which shows forth the works of His hands."* So in like manner we may—nay, we must—use ritual in the service of God. At the same time we absolutely reprobate and condemn its abuse.

There are two dangers in the use of ritual, either of which may cause it to degenerate into abuse. There is the danger of its being misunderstood or not understood. Then there is the possibility—a possibility sometimes realized—of its being misused.

1. It is at times misunderstood. When Michol, the daughter of Saul, "looking out through a window, saw David leaping and dancing" with all his might before the ark, she sneered. She despised and ridiculed the action which she did not understand. "She despised him in her heart." She compared him to "one of the buffoons."† The sneering race of Michol still survives. They will have no glorious churches, no lights and candles, no gorgeous vestments, no graceful processions, no triumphs of art in the sanctuary, no soul-stirring music in the choir. They will have all these in the palaces of kings, in the mansions of the rich, in the ball rooms, the theatres, the concert halls—but they would proscribe them in the house of God. So, when they see our rites and ceremonies, like Michol, they sneer, they scoff, they "despise." God was pleased and appeased by David's dancing; He was angered by Michol's sneer. "Therefore Michol, the daughter of Saul, had no child to the day of her death."

To appreciate we must first understand; to understand we must stand under and learn. We must see as Catholics see, if we are to appreciate the value of

* Ps. xviii 1. † 2 Kings vi.

ceremonial. If you look at a painted window from the outside, it is blotched and blurred, it is meaningless and vain. But if you look at it from the inside of the church, as it is intended to be viewed, it is graceful and beautiful and instructive as well—a book, a poem, a mirror, a sermon. It pleases the eye; it gladdens the heart; it raises the mind; it feasts the soul; it gives colour to life itself. Apply this to ritual. We must see as Catholics see, and understand as they understand, if we are to appreciate as they do, the use and value of ceremonial.

2. The second danger, the second pitfall which we have to avoid, is the misuse of ritual. Is is the danger of those who make Ritualism a religion, who rest on the outward forms, and not on the spirit which should be its soul. There are many such, I fear, in our English-speaking lands to-day; many on both sides of the Atlantic sea. They are æsthetes rather than Christians. They are worshippers of the æsthetic, only, instead of going into an ecstasy over a sunflower, a piece of old china, or a bit of point-lace, they rave about "high celebrations," and "chasubles" and "incense" and "candles" and "flowers," as though these, of no essential value in themselves, were religion, and not merely the accessories of religion which may easily be reasonably suppressed. They call their service "Mass," and do not stop to ask whether he who pretends to say it is really and truly an undoubted priest. They wear vestments, without satisfying themselves that the wearer has "Orders." They bow their heads and bend their knees, and they are not really convinced that there is a true sacramental presence in the world. They waft incense and burn candles and cull flowers without first being satisfied that the Lord is verily upon the altar throne, or that the table is an altar at all. This misuse of ritual, this substitution of ritualism for religion, this prostitution of religious ceremonial, is, I fear, the empty

worship, the vain superstition—for it is nothing more and nothing less—of many in these lands. These are dangers, pitfalls, "rocks of offence" which we must avoid. To sum up:

1. We are not, we must not be, as the idols of David's psalm, "which have mouths and speak not, eyes and see not, ears and hear not, . . . hands and feel not, feet and walk not . . . and cry not in their throat."* We must use the senses of the body, as well as the faculties of the soul in the service of the God who gave them. Only we must let the interior devotion be the life, the soul, the energizing, vivifying principle of our external worship of God. In a word, we must intend what we do, and mean what we say. We must breathe the spirit of devotion into our external religion, and our external actions must exhale the perfume of an interior service and love.

2. When those who are not of us enter this, or any other Catholic church, and witness our rites and ceremonies, they should endeavour to leave their prejudices, i.e., their previous judgements, hastily formed, outside. They should try—though it is difficult I know—to see with Catholic eyes, to see as Catholics see; to hear with Catholic ears, to hear as Catholics hear; to enter into the thoughts, the spirit, the intention of the Catholic mind and heart, though as yet they may not believe, or even wish to believe, with Catholic faith.

3. And what do we Catholics see and hear in our Catholic rites? What are the thoughts, what the spirit which enter into our Catholic minds and hearts? You know, my Catholic brethren. We see and hear, and we wish to give evidence of, and expression to, the interior spirit of faith and hope and love. With the bowing of the head, we bow the mind before the eternal truth; it is an outward sign of an interior act of faith. With the bending of the

* Ps. cxiii.

knee, we bend our will before Him who was, who is, and who is to come; it is the external evidence of the worship of mind and heart. With the prostration of the body we prostrate our souls; it is the manifestation of our adoring love of the all-holy, almighty God. In the wafting of the censer and the rising of the incense, we blend our prayers with the eastern perfume, asking that with the incense the prayer may ascend, only higher, even to the eternal throne.

Our national poet

> Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
> Sermons in stones, and good in everything.

A Catholic church is a "sermon in stone." Catholic ceremonial is a "book." The candles, the flowers, the music, the vestments, the gifts of nature; the gold, the silver, the marble, the precious stones, all these are "tongues" which speak to God for us, they are as messengers bearing our thoughts, our will, our words to His presence. They are heard in heaven—even if misunderstood by some on earth. Their language is the language of faith, of hope, of love. So there is "good in everything"—good in rites and ceremonies, good in the use of ritual, for it is the external worship of God.

II

The Soul of Ritual

God is a Spirit; and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.—*John* iv.

It is the spirit that quickeneth.—*John* vi, 64.

RITUAL is one of the burning subjects of the day. External religion is one of the great controverted points of the hour. This cathedral, with its daily liturgical services, is our contribution to the controversy. It is the Catholic answer, or the answer of Catholics, to the question which, for some decades

of years, has been and which to-day is so often raised. Rites and ceremonies are as a battlefield on which, both on this side of the Atlantic, and, especially just now, on the other, two conflicting armies have been waging an uncompromising war—a religious war, it is true, but a war all the same—a war as fierce and relentless, as determined on both sides as the war which we all but recently watched with such deadly interest for two weary years in the south of the great African continent. It is a crucial war—a war upon which dogma, doctrine, spiritual life (and naturally ceremonial) depend. Hence, has it caused a crisis in the Church "by law established" in this land; and in America it has created two clearly distinct and definitely divided Churches amongst men. In the Catholic Church, on account of her unity of government, of doctrine and of head, such a crisis is an impossibility. Her unity is assured; her members are not only undivided but indivisible. Her doctrine, her government are one—one always, one everywhere. But outside the unity of the fold, ritual has been, and is, a fruitful cause of disunion, a prolific source of division. The field upon which the battle is waged is the pulpit, the platform, the press, and even the sanctuary. The weapons of the warfare are the pen, the tongue and outward ceremonies. The battle-cry is, on the one side, "Ritual—let us express our belief, let us profess our worship, let us proclaim our faith by ritual"; on the other side the cry is, "Down with ritual! It is Popery, and Popery hardly in disguise. Away with it; we will have none of it. It is foreign to our Church and a contradiction of our Protestant principles!"

The subject before us is "Ritual in Catholic worship." We hold no brief either for Ritualist or anti-Ritualist. Ritual in the Catholic Church—we Catholics know what that means. But to the non-Catholic, to the thinking man, even amongst non-Catholics, unless he thinks deeply and reads diligently, and

inquires of those who know, ritual must be a mystery, the mystery of external religion. It has become a mystery through misunderstanding. The mystery is a myth. It does not really exist, except in the imagination of those who do not read, do not think, and refuse to inquire. The mystery has been raised, or has arisen, in part from the fact that those who are opposed to our external religion, imagine that our religion is all external, all outward show, all ostentatious pageantry and sensuous glitter. Hence they quote against us the words spoken by Jesus at Capharnaum: "It is the spirit that quickeneth." Against us! Why they are the very words we quote as our justification! They cite, too, as though that at least were conclusive, His rebuke to the woman at the well of Samaria, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." The very words, again, which we, in preaching and practising ritual, never cease to impress upon our people. The admonition of Jesus Christ was directed not against the use but the abuse of ceremonial. It was a protest against formalism; it was a rebuke to the pharisees of all times.

Let us look at the history of the oft-quoted words. The Samaritan woman maintained, with her people, that only in one place was God to be worshipped—on Mount Garazim, the mountain near Sichar, where the Samaritans had built their schismatical temple. This they held in superstitious awe. It was, they taught, the holiest, nay, the one holy, spot on earth, the site at once of the early Eden, the scene of the sacrifices of Adam, Seth, Noe and Abraham, the Bethel of Jacob's Vision. Here they held, and here only, sacrifice was to be offered to God. When they prayed, they turned towards Garazim, even as the Mohammedan turns to the east. It was their Mecca. It was holier to them than Sinai, or Jerusalem the holy City, to the orthodox Jew. Our Lord, in the passage quoted, proclaimed this to be superstition. The Most

High is neither limited to place nor confined by space. "God dwelleth not in temples made by hands . . . that is, as needing them."* He transcends all limits, He passes all space, He is everywhere. Consequently He can be worshipped, neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem *only*, but everywhere. He is a Spirit; He must be adored, not only bodily, not merely in one place, but "in spirit and truth"—anywhere, everywhere. "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true adorer shall adore the Father in spirit and in truth. For the Father also seeketh such to adore Him. God is a Spirit; and they that adore Him must adore Him in spirit and in truth."†

We must avoid the extremes both of pharisaism and of Samaritanism. The pharisees made ritual their religion; the Samaritans not only denied many of the Jewish doctrines, but despised their rites, ridiculed their ceremonies, and condemned their religious observances as the outcome of bigotry and the evidence of hypocrisy. Professing to avoid the Scylla of formalism, they made shipwreck on the Charybdis of irreligion. Our Lord warns the world against extremes. We must give to God external worship. Yes, but the spirit must be its soul; it must not be purely exterior, else it will be a lifeless body, a dead thing. God is a Spirit; He must be worshipped not only externally, but "in spirit and in truth." Man is not, like angel, a simple substance. He is a composite being, composite in his nature, his life, his ways. He is made up of flesh and spirit, matter and mind, body and soul, exterior senses and interior faculties. He has mind and will; he has at the same time eyes, ears, lips, hands, feet, mouth. He has a body, that is, and a soul. He owes all to God—the worship of the body and the worship of the soul; the worship of eye and ear, of hand and foot, as well as the worship of reason and will.

Religion, consequently, like man the worshipper,

* Acts xvii, 24. † John iv, 23, 24.

must be composite—interior and exterior. The exterior must manifest the interior spirit; the interior spirit must inform, vivify, energize the external service. This is religion. As the exterior actions of a man are only human actions when prompted by his mind and will, so outward worship—rites and ceremonies—is only religion when it comes from the mind as from its living source, when it is prompted by and is the expression of the soul. "It is the spirit which quickeneth." When a man pretends to be what he is not, he is a hypocrite, and his action is hypocrisy. So the outward profession of religion by words, by signs, or by actions, without the interior spirit of faith and love is formalism. Formalism is spiritual hypocrisy.

This formalism is what our Lord condemns. "Woe" to those, He says, who, like whited sepulchres, are "beautiful to the eye," but "within are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness." It is the spirit that quickeneth, i.e., giveth spiritual life; without the soul, there is spiritual death. Our Saviour anathematizes those who made clean the outside of the platter only, those who sounded trumpets when they gave alms, and disfigured themselves when they fasted, who wore their phylacteries broad, yet interiorly were wrong with God. "Woe to you scribes and pharisees, hypocrites." It was upon their hypocrisy, and not upon their external religion that He pronounced His "woe." Woe to you scribes and pharisees, *because* you are hypocrites.

This, thank God, is not our ritualism. In our worship of God, however external, we at the same time worship Him in spirit and truth—else, our religion would be vain. The spirit, the motive—faith and love—must be its life, must quicken it, must make it of worth. Let us say it at once, and say it once for all. All external worship to be true must come from the heart, must be informed by the spirit of faith and begotten of the spirit of love. All so-called

"religion" that lacks this, however sensuous and gorgeous and glittering and ritualistic, is as "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal." All who worship thus are as "men beating the air." This was God's reproach to Israel: "This people worshippeth Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me."* This called forth His strongest condemnation. "To what purpose do you offer Me the multitude of victims? . . . Offer sacrifice no more in vain. Incense is an abomination to Me. The new moons, the sabbaths and other festivals I will not abide. Wash yourselves; be clean; take away the evil of your devices from my eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; and then come, saith the Lord; if your sins shall be as scarlet, they shall be made white as snow, and if they be red as crimson, they shall be white as wool."† Why this condemnation of ritual? Not because of its use, but by reason of the abuse. Religion had degenerated into formalism. There was exterior piety and interior sin; prayer of the lips which came not from the heart; outward sacrifices, and the soul in rebellion against God. It was ritualism and nothing more, a cloak for malice, an excrescence of pride.

Vain are thy offerings, vain thy sighs,
Without one gift divine;
Give it, my child, thy heart to Me,
And it shall rest on mine.

Ritual must be a symbol, a reflection, a sermon. The heart must be in the offering and in the sigh. The spirit must quicken every act, every gift we offer, every genuflexion we perform, every censer we swing, every banner we wave, else it will be as a shell without a kernel, a body without a soul, religion without God; so it will be of no avail, a mockery and a sham.

Ritual, even outside the fold of Catholic unity, has become part of the religious life of this land. We thank God for it. Our forefathers have prepared

* Isa. xxix, 13. † Isa. i, 11-18.

us for this external service of God. The ancient abbey churches and cathedrals of England—Westminster Abbey, Canterbury, Lincoln, Lichfield, Durham, York and Peterborough—are evidences to us of the belief of our fathers in ritual and external religion. They are their profession of faith, their tables of the law, their creed written in stone. St Peter Martyr wrote CREDO in his blood; our forefathers have written CREDO on their sacred buildings throughout the length and breadth of England. A church is an external prayer. It is an offering coming from a faithful mind, a loving soul, a grateful heart. It is a sublime act of faith and love. So that the ancient churches and the old liturgies of England have kept alive in the great heart of the country the faith in the exterior worship of God.

We may admit, too, that the Ritualistic movement of the past few decades of years in what are called "High Church circles," has helped to familiarize our people with Catholic ritual, and to accustom them to Catholic practices. It has helped to dispel the cloud of ignorance which for three centuries has hung over this land. It has familiarized our people with ecclesiastical terms, the language of the Church and her children. The day has gone when a church verger, asked by a Ritualistic lady, "Have you matins in this church?" is said to have replied: "No, madam, we have kamptulicon." Were a High Church minister to ask to-day, as one is said to have asked some years ago, "Does Sarum prevail in this cathedral?" he would hardly be answered now, as it is said he was answered then: "No, sir, the Dean's wife's name is Emily." The Ritualists, with their ritualism have educated the country in many of our customs—in the wearing of vestments, which are no longer called either "popish rags" or "ecclesiastical millinery"; in the solemn procession—they are not scandalized, nor do they invoke the law when we organize one; in the use of incense; in the burn-

ing of candles; in the offering of flowers. Englishmen have been taught to be tolerant of ceremonial, and to remember that they were wise men who carried incense as a present to our Lord, and that the virgins, in like manner, are called "wise" who carried lights when they came to meet Him, while they are called "foolish" who had none.

All this is well. We, with the Master, repudiate and anathematize mere exterior ceremonies, which have no ulterior meaning; we put under a ban words and actions, offerings and gifts, rites and ceremonies which are *only* outward, and which find no place in the heart and the mind. This would be the whitening of the sepulchre, the cleaning of the outside of the platter, leaving the interior foul and unclean. It would be a soulless body, a kernelless shell, a "cloud without water," in the expressive words of St Jude.*

But the external rites and the interior spirit, acting and reacting upon each other, as the body upon the soul, and the soul upon the body; the ceremonies which are the reflex of the thoughts of the mind and the affections of the will; the words and outward signs which are the messengers and handmaidens of the soul; the bodily senses which are the channels through which the interior spirit pours itself out into the ear of the eternal God. All this is true religion; all this is part of our Catholic Creed.

True ritualism—external worship, the dedication of self, the offering of nature's gifts to God; body worship, nature worship, wedded in indissoluble union to the worship of heart and soul, spirit worship that is—this man owes to God; this debt we, in our rites and ceremonies, endeavour, as best we can, to pay.

God Himself teaches us this, by example as well as by word. He prescribed it in its minutest detail, as part of His law to men. What is the Book of

* v, 12.

Deuteronomy? What the Book of Leviticus? What but a legal treatise, a statute book of God's commandments on the obligation of ceremonial? With what terrible words He enforces ritual in His service: "If thou wilt not hear the voice of the Lord thy God to keep all His commandments and *ceremonies* which I command thee this day, these curses shall come upon thee. Cursed shalt thou be in the city, cursed in the field. Cursed be thy barns, cursed thy stores. Cursed shall be the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy ground, the herds of thy oxen, and the flocks of thy sheep. Cursed shalt thou be coming in, cursed going out," etc.*

How full of external worship are the psalms of David, with their lessons to Israel! "Praise the Lord in the holy places. Praise Him with sound of trumpet. Praise Him with psaltery and harp. Praise Him with strings and organs." † The account of the dedication of Solomon's Temple reads almost like a ritualistic romance. The prophets preach ritual: "Rend your hearts, and not your garments." There is interior worship. Now comes the ritualistic worship: "Sound the trumpet in Sion. Proclaim a fast. Call the people together. Between the altar and the people, the ministers of the Lord shall weep, and say: Spare, O Lord, spare Thy people." ‡

When from words we come to facts, how redolent of ritual are the external actions of God in His dealings with men. There is the ritual of creation, the breathing upon the waters, the voice of the great Creator, the light succeeding to darkness, the separation of dry land from the water, the "springing up in the earth of every herb," "the spring" which "rose out of the earth, watering all the surface of the earth," the deep sleep of Adam and the mysterious formation of Eve. There is, again, the ritual of Bethel—with the ladder, and the wrestling, and the blessing, and the stone anointed with oil, and

* Deut. xxviii. † Ps. cl. ‡ Joel ii, 17.

the words of solemn meaning implying the dedication of a spot on earth to God. "How terrible is this place! Of a truth it is the house of God and the gate of heaven." Then we have the ritual of Sinai—the barrier raised around the mountain, thus forming a sanctuary to God, the thunder and the lightning, the voice of God, the tables of stone, the face of Moses, veiled when he spoke to the people, uncovered when he spoke to the Lord. How "gorgeous and glittering" the ritual of the Temple—the altar of incense, the tabernacle, the ark, the golden candlesticks "to bear up the lights," the vessels, and the lamps, and the oil, "the vestments used in the ministry of the sanctuary," the "vesture of Aaron," the "metal of silver and brass," the "tapestry" and "embroidery in blue and purple and scarlet twice dyed," the "onyx stones and the precious stones," and the very worker in the Temple whom "the Lord hath called by name. . . And hath filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom and understanding, and knowledge and all learning."* Truly, this is ritual indeed—more sensuous, more gorgeous than our own—yet it is "commanded" by the Lord God.

When He came on earth, He came "not to destroy but to fulfil," not to condemn but to justify. Hence we have the ritual of the New Testament. The ritual of Bethlehem—the choir of angels to sing, the shepherds going in procession to the stable, the wise men coming from the east, the crib as an altar, the swaddling bands as the vestments, the star as the lamp; the gold, frankincense and myrrh as the offerings; Mary, Joseph, shepherds and kings as adorers. We have the ritual of Thabor, "Moses and Elias seen in majesty"; the apostles falling upon their faces; the Son of Man "transfigured before them," with His face "shining as the sun," and "His garments white as snow," "a

* Exod. xxxv.

voice out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son'"; Peter crying out for additional ritual: "Lord, it is good for us to be here; if Thou wilt, let us build three tabernacles—one for Thee, one for Moses and one for Elias."* There is ritual in the very streets of Jerusalem—a procession is formed, garments are strewn upon the way, palm branches are waved, the air is rent with the choir of praise, "Hosanna to the Son of David." When our Lord institutes the Blessed Sacrament, although a supper-table is the altar, there is ceremonial: He lifts His eyes to heaven, He breaks the bread, He blesses it, He says the words of consecration aloud, and then perpetuates the mystery by appointing a sacrificing priesthood to "do this in commemoration of Me."

Then we come to the sublime tragic ritual of Calvary—seven words are spoken, the rocks are split, the veil of the Temple is rent in twain, the sun is darkened, the earth quakes, the graves are opened, the dead arise, the centurion cries out: "Of a truth this was the Son of God." When the institution of "the sacrament of reconciliation and pardon" is proclaimed, it is done with ceremonial—He shows them His hands and His side; He breathes upon them; He speaks the words of vicarious power: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them."† His very miracles were wrought ritualistically—He puts His fingers into the ears that are sealed; He anoints with spittle the eyes that are closed; He takes the dead man by the hand; He speaks words of marvellous power: "Ephpheta, be thou opened," "Arise and walk," "Lazarus, come forth."

Then when the Redeemer ascends to heaven, He bids His beloved John open heaven's gates to the gaze of men in the sublime pages of the Apocalypse. And what do we see? What does He reveal? Ritual—the ritual of heaven—One sitting on the throne; angels bowing down before Him; crowned

* Matt. xvii. † John xx, 23.

courtiers taking off their crowns; ancients falling down before the throne; virgins joining in the triumphant procession, "following the Lamb wheresoever He goeth"; a choir singing, "Holy, holy, holy," "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," * "Amen. Benediction and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, honour, and power and strength to our God, for ever and ever. Amen." †

And when we come down from Thabor, from Calvary, from high heaven, can we be surprised at the Master's representative on earth telling us that we must "receive and admit the approved ceremonies of the Catholic Church"? ‡ We are not as the angels, pure spirits; we have bodies and bodily forms. These we must dedicate to Him. We have bodily senses; we must offer to Him their service—eyes, ears, hands and voice. We use the gifts of earth; we must not make a holocaust of them to self. We must consecrate them in sacrifice to Him from whom they came. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all that He hath done for thee." § The soul must enter into our outward offerings to Him, the life-giving principle which makes the sacrifice a religious act. This is true religion. We must have within us the fire of love, the love which He came to enkindle. But the fire must reveal itself in the eye, the hand, the mouth, which speaketh "from the abundance of the heart." Would a father, or a mother, or a friend be satisfied if our love remained hidden within the secret depths of the soul? Do they not expect outward signs of the inward grace, the sacrament of love? The rays of the fire must be seen in the senses, even as the light in a room is seen through the window and the open door. The sap in a tree is not absorbed by the inner life of the tree; it is evidenced exteriorly in flower, in fruit, in leaf. Apply this to spiritual life, spiritual growth, and the

* Apoc. v, 12. † Apoc. vii, 12. ‡ Creed of Pope Pius IV.
§ Ps. cii, 2.

result is ritual, religious rites, religious ceremonies, religious external service. Not that these exterior acts are love. No; but they are the aroma of love. Not that they are devotion. No; but they are the perfume of devotion. They are the fragrance of the incense which comes from the censer of the heart.

Here, then, we have the key to Catholic ritual, the meaning of ceremonial, the *raison d'être* of beautiful churches, gorgeous processions, glittering vestments, lighted candles; here the explanation of the bowing of the head, the bending of the knees; here the secret of what we include in the comprehensiveness of the word *ritual*. It is nature worship, body worship, external worship united to the worship of the soul, as the flesh is united in wedlock to the spirit. Ritual, again, is the giving to God gifts of earth, the gift being the offering of the grateful soul. Shall our most ornate buildings—houses of Parliament, town halls, theatres and the like—be built for the service of men, and no worthy shrines be reared and consecrated to the service of God? Is all the marble from the quarries to be formed into statues of heathen gods, and into the likeness of famous or infamous men? Is all the wood in the forest—the cedar, the oak, the cypress—to be devoted to the use of the creature, and none to that of the Creator? Are the perfumes of Arabia to spend themselves in flattering the senses of luxurious men and sensuous women, and are none to be devoted to the worship of the Most High? Are vestments to be worn by kings and queens, and courtiers, and councillors, and mayors, and officials of the court? and are God's ministers to appear before their King in their workaday clothes for robes of ceremony? Must Freemasons, and Odd Fellows, and members of worldly societies form beautiful processions? and are such things to be forbidden to us alone? No, no; a thousand times, *no!* Give to God not the good, not the better, but the best; not the great, not the greater, but the greatest. Give to Him and His ser-

vice, if He asks for them, your daughters who are the fairest and your sons who are the most gifted. Dedicate to Him, in the building of His churches, the gold that is untarnished, the silver without alloy, the stones without flaw, everything the best and brightest. Make use in His worship of the music the most chaste and soul-inspiring, the service the most generous, the incense the most fragrant, the flowers that are sweetest, the things that are best. "For the Lord's is the earth and the fullness thereof, the world and all they that dwell therein."* But remember ever and remember everywhere that it is "the spirit that quickeneth"—the spirit of faith, the spirit of devotion, the spirit of generous, self-sacrificing love.

"God is a Spirit, and they who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth." All this external worship *is* worshipping "in spirit and in truth." The spirit informs and gives life to our outward service. Thus all our external religion reveals the "fire" within. It symbolizes at once and emphasizes the hidden truth, the sacred love. "All the glory of the King's daughter is within."†

"My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready,"‡ is the spiritual prayer of every truly ritualistic soul; then follows the external worship: "I will sing and give praise with glory."§ "My heart is ready; I will sing, I will wed my song to interior worship." "My heart is ready. I will bend my knee, I will bow my head, I will kneel, I will stand; I will cull flowers for the altar, and light candles and offer gifts—all these are my heart's tribute to my God." What is this but to say that ritual, to be worship, must be a human act, that external ceremonies, to ascend to God, must be a prayer, and being a prayer, must come from the mind, the heart, the soul of a man? "I will pray with the spirit, I will pray with the understanding; I will sing with the spirit, I will

* Ps. xxiii, 1. † Ps. xliv, 14. ‡ Ps. cvii. § Ibid

sing also with the understanding."* Whether I pray standing, or kneeling, or sitting, with hands joined or arms outstretched, "I will pray with the spirit" as well. "It is the spirit that quickeneth." "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth."

This is precisely what we do in our ritual. We offer the act, the gift, the outward ceremony vivified by the soul, the spirit. "I will pray with the spirit." The external ritual is spiritualized by the soul. "I will pray with the understanding, I will sing with the spirit." The thought comes from the soul and is expressed in the words of song. Thus ritual becomes a living, life-giving worship. "As the vine I have brought forth a pleasant odour: and my flowers are the fruits of honour and riches."† Yes, "as the vine"; but the vine must be a living vine and not a leafless tree, if it is to bring forth fruit, the pleasant odour, the flowers, the fruits of honour and riches. The vine is ritual. "It is the spirit that quickeneth." "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him," as they worship outwardly, must at the same time worship inwardly, they must worship "in spirit and in truth." This is the teaching of our Catholic creed.

III

The Language of Ritual

Because that which is known of God is manifest in them. For God has manifested it to them. For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; His eternal power also and divinity. —*Rom.* i, 20, 21.

THERE was logic stern and true in the action of the so-called "reformers" when they abolished ritual, when they pulled down altars and substituted tables, when they extinguished candles and scat-

* 1 Cor. xiv, 15. † Ecclus xxiv, 23.

tered the petals of altar flowers to the winds, when they forbade the symbolic vestments, when they banished images from churches, and put out the sanctuary lamp, when they "simplified" the worship of God. There is logic, too, in those of their successors to-day, who, standing in their places, try actively or passively, or both actively and passively, to carry out the "reformers'" designs. The abolition of rights and ceremonies which were symbolical was the means of changing the doctrines which they symbolized and of perpetuating the change. For ritual preaches creed, and keeps it, not only before the eyes, but consequently in the minds and hearts of the people. An altar implies sacrifice; candles and flowers and sanctuary lamp and tabernacle imply a real presence; priestly vestments tell of a sacrificing priesthood. Dispense with the symbols, and the reality will soon disappear. Close a child's senses and seal them from its earliest years—eyes, ears, lips, senses of smell and touch—and its mind will be a blank. Men and women are only grown-up children. Treat them as you would treat children, and your success is assured. It has been said, "Give me the making of the people's songs, and I will leave to you the framing of their laws." Let me say in the same sense: "Give me the framing of the people's ritual, and I will leave to you the drawing up of their creed." Ritual perpetuates doctrine; rites and ceremonies accentuate and emphasize teaching. Of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Anglican creed there are three which are intimately connected—the twenty-fifth, the twenty-eighth and the thirty-fourth. The two former are intended as the rejection of the Catholic sacramental system, and especially of the real presence, and the substitution of what is there called "the Lord's Supper." The thirty-fourth article goes on wisely and logically enough to claim for a nation the right to change or abolish ceremonies. Deny a doctrine if you will; but if you would make the de-

nial effective and effectual, if you would perpetuate the denial, you must put under a ban the rites and ceremonies which are its symbol or its outward form.

In like manner is there logic in the Church's ceremonial. Take away the divine presence in the Blessed Sacrament and (we see it in our churches on Good Friday when the Blessed Sacrament is temporarily removed) the lights will go out, the lamps will be extinguished, the flowers will fade, the incense will cease to perfume the air. But as long as there are candles and flowers, and altar and tabernacle, and lighted lamp and incense, and ceremonious rites, so long will Catholics continue to say: "Blessed be Jesus Christ in the most holy Sacrament of the altar." By our external signs, our liturgy and ceremonial, our music and song, our candles and flowers, our building of churches, our adorning them as best we may, our offering of gifts, our bowing of head and bending of knee, our vestments and the rest, we proclaim our faith to the world, we express our gratitude to God, we worship Him in external ways. This is the language of ritual.

In our rites and ceremonies there is a double apostolate. First, we speak to God. With Abraham we say: "Seeing that I have once begun, I will speak to my Lord, whereas I am but dust and ashes."* Secondly, then through external ritual God speaks to us. With David we may add: "I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me."† Ritual is man's voice speaking to God. It is also the voice of God speaking to man. Through ritual we speak to God. We may distinguish three voices in man from which come three different words. The three voices are the voice of the mind, the voice of the lips, and the voice of action. There are three words. There is the *verbum mentis*, the word of the mind; the *verbum oris*, the spoken word coming from the lips; the *verbum operis*, the outward act telling of the inward soul. The word

*Gen. xxviii, 29. † Ps. lxxxiv, 9.

of the mind in the spiritual sphere is the interior worship of the soul, or, as we generally call it, prayer. "I will pray with the spirit, I will pray with the understanding," as St Paul puts it.* St Thomas, too, defines prayer, *Oratio* (*oris ratio*), as *ascensus mentis ad Deum*, and again, *interpres desiderii nostri apud Deum*, "the lifting up of the mind to God," and "the interpreter of our desire to God."† This spiritual prayer must enter into all worship of God as its soul, its life, its vigour; it must be the uplifting of the mind to God, the expression of our will or desire. Else our words will not be prayers. They will be nothing better than the senseless drivel of a parrot, the meaningless chatter of a magpie, the empty sounds of a mocking-bird. "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercy of God that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, pleasing to God." Our service of God must be in all, through all and above all, the Apostle continues, *rationabile obsequium*, "a reasonable service."‡ "We must pray with the spirit."§ The spirit must quicken our words. Our worship "must be in spirit and in truth." This is true service of God.

But true and full worship must not end there. There is the word of the mouth prompted by the heart; the outpouring of the soul. This, too, is part of divine worship. St Paul's word is forcible: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."‖ We "confess with our mouth" in our external or vocal prayer, the word of the mouth. We do, and we must. The word of the mind like pent-up waters will escape and burst forth in the limpid streams of Church music and vocal prayer. So was it with God's servants. When Job was weighed down with sorrow, he was forced to cry: "I accuse myself and I do penance in dust and ashes."¶ This was the word of the mouth and the

* 1 Cor. xiv, 15. † *Summa*, 2a 2æ, qu. 83, art. 1 ad 1 et 3.
‡ Rom. xii, 1. § 1 Cor. xiv, 15. ‖ Rom. x, 9. ¶ xvii.

word of action—external ritual—coming from the soul. When Israel was in the depths of dereliction in Babylon, the Psalmist is our authority for saying that they cried out in vocal prayer and weeping. "On the rivers of Babylon, there we sat and wept when we remembered Sion."* The people left Egypt, and so intense was their joy that they burst forth in song: "*In exitu Israel de Egypto*, when Israel came out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from among a strange people."† Simon, the "just man who feared God," could not contain his gladness. When he held in his venerable arms the world's Redeemer, when he carried Him who carries all things, he must need break forth in the canticle perpetuated in the Church's Compline song, *Nunc dimittis*, "Now Thou dost dismiss Thy servant, O Lord, in peace" . . . for "mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."‡ Even Mary's heart, great though it was, could not always keep "these things, pondering them"; she must perforce express her gladness in words similarly perpetuated in the Vesper Office: *Magnificat*, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit doth rejoice in God my Saviour . . . for He that is mighty hath done great things, and holy is His name."§ Jesus Himself, our Master, our guide, joined in the choral hymn: "A hymn having been sung, they went forth to the Mount of Olives."‖

Angels are pure spirits, bodiless and voiceless; yet they are represented as singing in heaven. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain"; "Salvation to our God"; and the words of daily recurrence in the Mass, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts."

We, too, creatures of earth—with lips and tongues, with ears and voices—may and must join in the sacred song. The liturgical service of prayer and praise and song, give vent, in outbursts of sound, to the outpouring of mind and heart. Psalmody,

* cxxxvi. † Ps. cxiii. ‡ Luke ii, 29. § Luke i, 46.
‖ Matt. xxvi, 30.

hymnody, sacred song, are the external manifestation of the thoughts of the mind, and the affections of the will. They are the effervescence, the overflow, the outpouring of the religious soul. Hence you will notice, or you ought to be able to notice—it is the wish of our holy Father, Pope Pius X, that you should—that the Church's music varies according to the change of tone in the minds and hearts of her children, the change being directed and guided by the mother's heart and mind. The "temper" of the soul, changing with the varying seasons of the year, her music—the expression of the soul—accommodates itself, or should, to the change. During Advent, when we are expecting the coming of the Saviour, the music is subdued; it is full of the sombre notes of unrealized joy, of expectation as yet unfulfilled. At Christmas Christ has come; the Church is full of grateful joy; her music is bright, glad, joyous; she sings "Glory to God" with spirit, and "peace to men" almost with glee.

In the Lenten season her thoughts are tinged with sadness, as she thinks of the sinner's sin and the Saviour's sorrow. The organ is hushed. With Israel in Babylon she "hangs up her instruments on the willows"; and when the world cries for joyful music, "A hymn of the songs of Sion," she replies mournfully: "How shall we sing the songs of the Lord in a land that is strange?"* The world may be dissatisfied; but the Church, in her sombre music, fulfils her mission. Then comes the glad Easter with the joyous "Alleluia." "The disciples were glad when they saw the Lord."† Pentecost follows with the plaintive yet triumphal sequence and song, the *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, and the *Veni Creator*, which we all know and love so well. When Corpus Christi succeeds to the "Feast of Tongues," the day specially devoted to the grateful acknowledgement of the ever-abiding presence of Jesus upon the altar, St Thomas Aquinas

* Ps. cxxxvi. † John xx, 20.

—who wrote so lovingly and so theologically upon the mystery of untold and ineffable love—tells us what our music must be. *Lauda Sion Salvatorem, . . . Sit laus plena, sit sonora.*

> Sing forth, O Sion, sweetly sing
> The praises of thy Shepherd King,
> In hymn and canticles divine
> Dare all thou cans't; thou hast no song
> Worthy His praises to prolong,
> So far surpassing powers like thine.
> . . . .
> Then be the anthem clear and strong
> Thy fullest notes, thy loudest song
> The very music of the breast.

So, throughout the Christian year, we speak to God in prayer, in psalm, in song. We sing to Him, as we think of Him, as our hearts are drawn to Him, according to our various moods, influenced by the varying seasons of peace, sorrow or joy, This is "the sacrifice of praise", the divine service of song, the *verbum oris*, the mouth confessing the belief of the heart. It is the message sent to God by mind and heart on the wings of faith and love.

Now we come to the VERBUM OPERIS—the outward act, like the word of the mouth, speaking to God the thoughts of the mind, the affections of the will, the service of the soul. We can speak by any, we can speak by every sense. Speech is not peculiar to the tongue. The tongue is the *ordinary* organ of speech. But dumb men can speak. We can speak by the hand, the eye, the head, the other members of the bodily frame. Speech is a message from the soul. We can choose the channel—the telephone—through which we send our message. The message is born in the mind; it receives strength from the will; then, mind and will make use of bodily sense as their messenger. This using of bodily sense—whichever sense it be—is the external profession, the outward confession, the bodily worship of God. There is the language of the hand. The warm friendly

grasp tells of welcome and joy; the cold formal touch chills us, it tells us that affection is as yet unborn, or if born, that it is dying or even dead. Then there is the language of the eye. You read the eye as you read a book. Your soul speaks through the eye, sometimes more clearly, often more truthfully, than through the lips. The lips may lie; the eye speaks the truth. It is easy to be dumb with the tongue; it is difficult to be dumb with the eye. How differently you look at a friend and at an enemy, at one you know well and have known long, and at a chance passer-by! The very bowing of the head is a message from the soul—a different message to a king and a servant, to an enemy and a friend, to one whom you would attach to yourself and one whom you would keep at a distance, to one who is familiar and one who is "a nodding acquaintance." There is a language outside the senses. A gift is a message from the soul—the *verbum operis*—the birthday present, the wedding gift, the engagement ring, the wedding ring, even the legacy—the parting present—the thoughtful act of the living, revealed perhaps only when life is gone, a welcome voice from the dead, a message from the tomb.

Apply all this to God and to things divine. All these are ways in which, in our ritualistic service, we reveal the worship of God. It is the language of ritual. It is our message to God. It is not worship I know, but it is the casket of gold, silver, brass or wood, as the case may be, which contains our offering to God. The hand, the eye, the voice, the head, the knee, the gift, carry our thoughts to Him. How strong, how powerful this voice! St Bernard says of it, "*Vox verbi sonet, vox exempli* TONET—the voice of the word makes a sound, the voice of the other senses is as THUNDER." The word attributed to Seneca, the wise old pagan, expresses what I would say, "We more easily believe our eyes than our ears." God sees as well as hears everything. We

speak to Him not only in our mind, not only with our lips, but we worship Him with bodily sense and external gifts.

This, then, is the language of ritual. Thus do we speak to God. He gives us a mind, we use it in His service, lifting it up to him in prayer. He gives us a heart, we dedicate to Him its love. He gives us a head, we bow it to Him; a knee, we bend it in His honour; a body, we prostrate it before Him. He gives us the mysterious gift of speech—peculiar to angels and to men—we consecrate it to Him in song and psalm and prayer. He gives us earthly things, we dedicate them to His service—the wood, the stone, the marble, the perfumes, the flowers, "for the earth is the Lord's . . . and the fullness thereof." All these are His, of all He is the rightful owner; to Him they all belong, even as to the painter of a picture, the carver of a statue, the writer of a book belong the fruit of pencil, chisel, brain, and pen.

Thus do we speak to God in ritual. "Lord, Thou knowest all things," and by these offerings of my mind, my lips, my heart, "Thou knowest that I love Thee."

2. By ritual, again, God speaks to us. This is the second apostolate to which we have referred. We are all influenced by external things. Our minds and wills, our very lives, are tinged and dyed by them—more than we admit, more, perhaps, than we realize and know. The old scholastic axiom, *Nihil est in intellectu, quin prius fuerit in sensu*, and that other aphorism of the schools, *Nihil volitum quin præcognitum*, pithily express a truth older even than scholasticism. Truth does not date either from the Middle Ages, or the earliest age. It is independent of time. It traverses all ages. It is eternal. The pregnant words which I have quoted mean that we learn through our senses; that, in our present state, the mind is dependent upon the sense, "as the mistress upon her handmaid"; that the bodily senses are the

telephones, or the telescopes, or the loud-sounding megaphones, through which, God, and nature, and men, and sometimes grace, speak to the soul. God and grace are independent of the senses; nature and men depend upon them. Still, God and grace, oftentimes, indeed for the most part, speak to men in a human way—through the senses.

We are children of God, and He treats us as we treat children. We cry "Abba, Father"; * we say every day—and often each day—with faith and love, "Our Father, who art in heaven." How does a father teach his children? Is it not by appealing to the outward senses, and through them, as through the safest and surest channels, to the intellect and the will? The senses are the aqueducts through which the water of truth is poured into our minds, the wine of charity into our hearts, the soothing oil of mercy into our souls. These streams come through the eye. In infancy through picture-books, in youth by means of object-lessons, in riper years through travel and experience. They come through the ear. In childhood we learn to talk by listening to and then imitating sounds, the sound of another's voice; in later years we thus learn to sing, to speak our native tongue and the languages of other lands. The other senses are, in like manner, the organs through which we learn. They tell us, or we are told through them, of pleasure and pain, of sorrow and joy, of life and death.

So does God, our Father, teach us, ritualistically, through external things, appealing through the senses to the mind. "In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." † These treasures, however, do not remain hid. "I, wisdom, have poured out rivers. I, like a brook out of a river of a mighty water, I like a channel of a river, and like an aqueduct, came out of paradise." ‡ He pours the rich treasures into the intellect of man through the

* Rom. viii, 15. † Col. ii, 3. ‡ Eccl. xxiv, 40, 41.

external senses. Exterior things are as the voice of God. "Let Thy voice sound in my ear, for Thy voice is sweet."* The prayer is answered; the voice of God sounds in our ears; it is heard by the sense attuned to faith. "The words of the wise are heard in silence."† A material church is an echo of the voice of God, a sermon, an object-lesson, a picture in stone. When we see the outward building and "hear in silence," we are moved. We cry with Jacob in Bethel: "Of a truth the Lord is in this place; this place is holy. It is the house of God and the gate of heaven."‡ When we look up to the stately steeple, the graceful spire or the lofty campanile, we are drawn to look up to heaven. "I have lifted up mine eyes to the mountain, whence help shall come to me."§ "To Thee have I lifted up mine eyes, to Thee who dwellest in the heavens."‖ We enter the church and see the lighted lamp—it is to us as the star to the wise men, leading us to the feet of God. "We have seen His star in the east, and we have come to adore Him."¶ We gaze upon the tabernacle—it is "the holy of holies," where dwells the "hidden God." Our eyes turn to the lights and candles, and our minds are lifted up to "the Light for the revelation of the Gentiles," to the "true Light which enlightens every man coming into the world."** The incense, as it ascends, reminds us that our prayer, as incense, should go up to God. The flowers are nature's gift to nature's God; they bid us offer our gifts—the gifts of mind, heart, life—to Him. The various seasons of the ecclesiastical year appeal to us. Lent bids us sorrow for sin; Easter tells us to rejoice; Christmas admonishes us to lift up glad and grateful and hopeful hearts to God. The vestments are the index to the spirit of the feast: red speaks of the blood of martyrs, or of the Sacred Blood of Jesus shed for sin; white is the emblem of purity,

* Cant. ii, 14. † Eccles ix, 17. ‡ Gen. xxviii, 16. § Ps. cxx, 1.
‖ Ps. cxxii, 1. ¶ Matt. ii, 2. ** John i.

and tells of the virgin's crown; purple bids us do penance for sin; black appeals to us for prayers for the faithful suffering dead. The devotions of the Church are the voices of the Church re-echoing the voice of God. The Stations of the Cross preach to us the Passion of our Lord. The Rosary bids us think of the joys, sorrows and glories of the life of Him "who was, who is, and who is to come." The images of Mary and the saints, like the statues of our heroes, spur us on to emulation and imitation of the high ideals of the Christian life and ways. The ceremonies—if only we "hear them in silence," if only we "ponder them in our hearts"—are as monitors to tell us to bow down, and then lift up our minds and hearts to God, and with our body to prostrate our souls before the eternal God.

The music, too, of the Church. The music! What an eloquent preacher, if only it preaches wisely and well! It is a most forcible language addressed through the ear to the passions, through the passions to the mind, through the mind to the soul, through the soul to the life. Through the Church's music God speaks to man, soothes him, softens him, moves him—to sorrow, to sadness, to love, to joy, to gladness. Truly music is the echo of the voice of God. How David's music calmed the troubled spirit of Saul! How the music of the Church's song moved St Augustine to believe, to weep, to devotion, to faith and hope and love! Hence has it a place—a place of paramount importance—in the legislation of the Church. Hence does it form part of the Church's ritual—on earth and in heaven.

All these things—Church, altar, candles, flowers, music, ceremonies, ritual—have a language of their own, and the language is the voice of God speaking through them to men. "The voice of the Lord is upon the waters. The voice of the Lord is in power. The voice of the Lord is in magnificence."* The

* Ps. xxviii.

ritual of the Church is that voice of God, speaking, preaching, teaching His ways and His will to men.

Ritual is an Apostolate of charity in the world. It is a bond of union between God's children on earth, here and everywhere. Abolish ritual, the external in religion, and where is the bond of union? Let an anti-Ritualist travel in a foreign land, amongst people who speak a strange tongue; let him seek out a church after his own heart—if he can find one—where all ritual is put under a ban, where ceremonial is proscribed, what is there to feed his soul? What to lift up mind and heart to God? How is he to join in the worship? His tongue is tied; he cannot speak the strange language; his ear is sealed, he cannot take in the unfamiliar sounds; his eye is idle, there is no ceremonial to respond to it; there is nothing to appeal to his other senses. No music for the ear to lift up the soul, no ceremonies for the eye to speak to the mind; no incense, no procession, nothing—all is blank. Religion to him is cold, dark, dead. He has eyes and sees nothing, ears and hears nothing, intellect which is starved spiritually for lack of spiritual food. The eclipse is total. There is neither sun, nor moon nor stars.

How different the lot of a Catholic in a land which is not his own! Wherever he goes in the vast, wide world a Catholic Church is his home, his Father's house, the home of his Blessed Lord. I know not whether amongst my audience this morning, in this great cathedral church, there is any Catholic who is a stranger here. Understand my meaning. I know that no Catholic is ever a stranger in a Catholic Church, as no child is an alien in his mother's home, wherever the home may be, as we who have travelled know to our joy. We are always at home in our mother's home. No Catholic is a foreigner in a Catholic Church. What I mean is this. I know not if there be one who, coming from another land—France, Germany, Italy, China, Japan—is a

stranger to our tongue, and who has not understood one of the many words which I have spoken this morning. In a city like this—the most cosmopolitan in the world—there is sure to be at least one. No matter, I care not. He will have heard a sermon; he will have sent, in return, a message to God. He will have heard the language—the Catholic language of ritual. It will have appealed to his other senses, nay, to his very ear. He will have heard the voice of God; he will have spoken to God in his turn. "I will hear what the Lord God will speak in me." * "Seeing that I have once begun, I will speak to my Lord."†

When, as a stranger in the land, he entered the church, at once an eloquent, though silent, voice spoke to him within. All was so familiar, all bade him welcome, all made him feel at home—the lamp, the altar, the tabernacle, the procession, the vestments, the choir of singers, the very tongue in which they sang—the Latin tongue, the universal language, the *Esperanto* of the Catholic Church—the ceremonies, the bowing, the kneeling, the incense, all was as a bond of union, linking him to those in the far-off home. The same Mass was said to which he had been accustomed from childhood in the dear distant land. The same music stirred his heart which had been familiar to him through many years that have gone: the *Kyrie* moved him to sorrow, the *Gloria* to joy, the *Credo* revived the faith which had been his as long as memory could go, the *Sanctus*, the *Agnus Dei*, all drew tears perhaps from his eyes, faith and joy and love from the inmost depths of his soul. "I believe in the Catholic Church," he said, "if I *can* believe in that which I *see*. I am a member of the Catholic Church here in this strange land as much as in my dear far-off home." The Church and the Church's external worship is the symbol of the Catholic creed, the confession of her faith, the profes-

* Ps. lxxxiv, 9. † Gen. xxviii, 29.

sion of her love, the Church's sermon to her people. The holy water at the door suggests the prayer, "Wash me yet more from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sins." The Tabernacle above the altar tells of the divine Presence, though veiled, real and true: it is a sermon from the text, "Do this in commemoration of Me." The lighted lamp, never extinguished except when the Master is from home, the burning candles, the fragrant incense, the perfumed flowers, cry out, "Come, let us adore."

> The shadows fell from roof and arch,
> Dim was the incensed air;
> One lamp alone, with trembling ray,
> Told of the Presence there.

The white-robed army of ministers, the chasubled priests, the vested attendants are as the open page of the Apocalypse, revealing to us the worship of heaven. The Latin, used in the liturgical service, is a sermon on the catholicity of the Catholic Church, Catholic in time, in place, in numerical strength, Catholic even in tongue. The music stirs the heart, now to sorrow, now to joy, now to triumph, now to faith and hope and love, always to God. The baptismal font is a reminder to us that we are sons of God. The confessional warns us that, if we fail and fall, we may rise and stand and walk again. The crucifix is a message from the Redeemer to all who would be redeemed. The communion rail speaks of a strength not human, but divine. The Stations of the Cross cry out ever, "See what love!" The sacred pictures of saints and statues of God's servants are perpetual monitors, bidding us, "Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ."*

Here is the language of ritual. God speaks to us through eye, through ear, through every sense. We speak to God, "Lord, Thou knowest all things," and by this external worship coming from my inmost soul, "Thou knowest that I love Thee."

* 1 Cor. iv, 16.

IV

The Centre of Ritual

And behold there was a throne set in heaven, and One sitting on the throne.—*Apoc.* iv, 4.

THIS is what St John saw "in spirit"; this the Apostle made known to us in the fourth and subsequent chapters of the Apocalypse. He saw this, but he saw more. He saw *around* the throne "a rainbow." He saw "four and twenty ancients . . . clothed with white garments, and golden crowns upon their heads." He saw "seven golden candlesticks," and in their midst "one like to the Son of Man, with a garment down to His feet and girded with a golden girdle." He saw "seven lamps burning before the altar." He saw "four living creatures . . . [and heard them] saying, 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and who is, and who is to come.'" He saw the four and twenty ancients fall down before Him that sitteth upon the throne . . . and cast their crowns before Him . . ." He saw "harps," and heard the music of "harpers harping upon their harps." He saw "golden vials, full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints." He saw, "under the altar, the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God . . . and white stoles were given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest for a little time till their fellow-servants and their brethren, who were to be slain even as they, should be filled up." He heard "the voices of many angels, to the number of thousands upon thousands." He beheld "the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints," and an angel take "the censer and fill it with the fire of the altar," and another angel, and a third and a fourth "sound a trumpet," and those "who have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and have made them white in

the Blood of the Lamb . . . before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple."

This is the ritual of heaven. And the centre of it? The "One that sitteth upon the throne." And the reason of it? "For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall rule them, and shall lead them to fountains of the waters of life; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."*

1. We come down to earth, and we see and hear to-day, and in this very cathedral church, much that we have seen and heard in heaven. This is the ritual of earth. And what, or rather Who, is the centre of it all? As in heaven, "the One that sitteth on the throne." Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the Sun around which all ritual revolves, the great Orb which draws all to itself. He is the Sheaf before which all the sheaves bow down, the One whom "the sun, and the moon, and the eleven stars worship."† Art, science, architecture, painting, sculpture, nature and nature's gifts, man and man's service—bodily service and spiritual homage—all are requisitioned in the worship of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Here is the secret, the centre, the heart, the soul of Catholic ceremonial. Jesus is our King. *Ave Rex noster!* All hail to our King! The Church is His palace. The altar His throne. The sanctuary His audience chamber. The ministers His cabinet. We are His courtiers, we His creatures, we His children.

To appreciate the meaning of ritual in Catholic worship, we must realize the Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence. To participate, reasonably and devoutly, in the ceremonial of our service, we must first make a true act of faith in this article of our Catholic creed: I believe that "in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist there are contained, truly, really, and substantially, the Body and Blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord

*Apoc. vii, 17. †Gen. xxxvii.

Jesus Christ."* We Catholics believe that Jesus Christ, God and Man, is really present in the ever adorable and ever adored Sacrament of Love. Let us see what this means. We go over to Bethlehem on the first Christmas night; we hear the angels sing, "Glory to God and peace to men"; we ask what it means, this strange, unearthly song; and the angels answer: "There is born unto you a Saviour who is Christ the Lord in the city of David." With the shepherds we go down to Bethlehem to "see the word that has come to pass," we find the Child . . . wrapped in swaddling bands and laid in a manger"; we kneel down and worship that Child, for He is "the Word made flesh," "Emanuel, God, with us." A Catholic church is to us another Bethlehem. Bethlehem means "a house of bread"; a Catholic church is a house of the "Living Bread come down from heaven," the home of Jesus Christ our Lord. In spirit we visit Nazareth; we see Mary and Joseph, and least but yet greatest, the divine Child; we kiss the footprints of that Child in lowly, adoring love—for though He works at a menial trade, it is He who "made heaven and earth and all things therein." A Catholic church is to us a second Nazareth, where dwells Jesus Christ—"truly a hidden God." We follow Him through His public life; we hear Him expound His parables; we listen to His sermons; we witness His miracles of power. We believe Him to be just as "really present" in our churches as He was in Galilee, by the lake, in the Temple, on the mountain, when "He walked this earth and was seen by men." We see Him die on Calvary; the rocks are split; the veil of the Temple is rent; the earth quakes; the graves are opened; the dead arise; the sun is darkened; the Centurion cries in accents of tardy faith, "Of a truth this was

* *Council of Trent,* sess. xiii, can. 1. For explanation and early Christian testimonies to the Church's belief in this doctrine, see *The Catholic Creed, or What do Catholics Believe?* chap. xx.

the Son of God." The Catholic church is our Calvary, the Catholic altar our cross, the Mass the renewal of the sacrifice of Good Friday, and we, too, cry out, "Of a truth this IS the Son of God." When the Blessed Sacrament is taken from the tabernacle and is lifted up on the altar throne, or is raised above our heads in Benediction, or is carried in procession, we salute Him, "Rabboni—Master!" as did Magdalen when He came forth from the three days' tomb. Even as angels and archangels and thrones and virtues and dominations and principalities and powers and cherubim and seraphim fall down before Him in heaven, and offer incense and sing songs of praise, so do we on earth. "Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man." "Blessed be Jesus in the most holy Sacrament of the altar." This is the mystery of faith.

> I see not with mine eyes Thy wounds, as Thomas saw,
> Yet own Thee for my God, with equal love and awe;
> Oh, grant me that my faith may ever firmer be,
> That all my love and hope may still repose in Thee.

There is the *rationale* of a Catholic church—it is the home of Jesus on earth; of a Christian altar—it is the table of sacrifice; of a tabernacle—it is the King's earthly throne; of the sanctuary of a church —"it is the place where His glory dwelleth,"* our Bethlehem, our Nazareth, our Jerusalem, our Calvary, our heaven on earth; of the ministers and their service; of the candles and flowers; of the music and ceremonial. Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament is the centre of ritual on earth, as "the one that sitteth upon the throne" revealed in majesty, is the centre of ritual in heaven.

It is true that we have other altars—altars of Mary and the saints,—but *that* is the *maître autel*, as the French call it so well, the Master, or Master's altar. In ecclesiastical language it is *Altare Majus*, or, as we in our English tongue express it, "the

* Ps. xxv, 8.

High Altar"—the centre altar of all. The other altars, being but tributaries, the frame of the picture, the setting of this most precious stone. We have Stations of the Cross, but they end at the altar and lead us to the "One that sitteth on the throne." We have images of saints, but only to take us to Him. We have a chapel devoted to Mary's beautiful name, but it is only the antichamber to the audience chamber, the gate of the sanctuary, the passage to the throne. *Per Mariam ad Jesum.*

> The sacred homage that we pay
> To Mary's image here,
> To Mary's self, then on to God
> Ascends the starry sphere.

How much all this explains. It is the key to the seeming mystery of ceremonial. Jesus is our King, and He is present on the altar of every Catholic church. Then "to the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever, Amen."* "As the Lord liveth, and as my Lord the King liveth, in whatsoever place thou shalt be, Lord my King, either in death or in life, there will Thy servant be."† Do you not see why we bend our knees, when we enter a church, as men do, in their court ceremonial, when they approach an earthly king? Why we kneel down, as angels do in heaven, before the same eternal King? Why we bow our head, and bend our body in lowly worshipping love? Why we build churches, and adorn them as best we can? Why we wear vestments, as courtiers do, on court days, in the royal presence? Why we gather the choicest flowers and put them on our altars, as we offer nosegays to our earthly friends? Why we light candles, as our illuminations in honour of the heavenly King? Why we bid the incense arise and with it our prayers, as angels do in heaven? Why we form graceful processions, like the virgins who are crowned, "following the Lamb whitherso-

* 1 Tim. i, 17. † 2 Kings xv, 21.

ever He goeth"?* Why we, too, sing our songs of gladness, "Worthy is the Lamb," and "Hosanna to the Son of David"?

> Angels and we, assisted by this art,
> May sing together, though we dwell apart.

"Lift up thine eyes and see round about," O Lord, we may say, in the Prophet's words; "all these are gathered together, they are come to THEE." †

2. Jesus is our King; the church is His palace. No wonder that Ruskin wrote, though it is due to his memory to say that he was referring to Gothic architecture: "A cathedral, with every stone that is laid on its solemn walls, raises some human heart nearer heaven." So should it be. It is the home of Him to whom Peter said, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God," ‡ of whom, even in the hour of His deepest humiliation, the Centurion bore witness, "*Vere Filius Dei erat Iste*—of a truth this was the Son of God!" §

What is a Catholic church? This church? Every church that is truly Catholic? Even the poorest, the lowliest, the most like Bethlehem's stable? It is, as we have said, the frame of the living picture, the picture being the real, living Christ. It is as the sacred, consecrated and undefiled womb of Mary Immaculate. It is as Bethlehem, where He is daily born in the sacrifice of the Mass. It is as Nazareth where He deigns to live, as in the lowly cottage home long years ago. It is holier than the Temple of Solomon which contained only the tables of the law; this containing, though not circumscribing, the Giver of the law. It is more sacred than the Holy of Holies into which the high priest only entered, and even he but once a year. ‖ It is more holy than Bethel, "the house of God and the very gate of heaven"; more sacred than synagogue, or temple, or tabernacle, the resting-place of the ark.

* Apoc. xiv, 4. † Isa. xlix, 18. ‡ Matt. xvi, 16. § Mark xv, 39. ‖ Heb. ix, 7.

This is the symbolism of a church. This the secret of its sanctity. It is the home of the living God. How much all this explains! It is the key to the mystery of England's glorious fanes, built by our Catholic fathers, one with us in faith, in devotion to holy Church, in loyalty to Peter's throne, before their children besought Jesus to "depart from their coasts"—of Canterbury and Lincoln, of Lichfield and Worcester, of York and Durham, of Melrose in Scotland and Kilconnell in Ireland. Why did our fathers build them so gracefully, so gloriously, with such lavish expenditure, such generous profusion of wealth? Why provide so nobly for their perpetuation, investing funds for the fabric, for the choir, for the clergy to minister within their walls? The answer is familiar to us who are of the fold. They believed in "the real presence," around which controversy has waxed so strong of late years in our land. They built for the eternal God and not for mortal man. These churches which they raised were to be for ever—so they vainly thought—homes of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, "tabernacles of God with man." This answers, again, the question put so often by many a few years ago, "Why build this stately cathedral in the heart of busy, bustling, commercial London?" A question often asked, not only about this church, but other stately churches, here in London, and in other parts of the land. They were to be—the hope has been realized and they are now—temples of the living God. David has put this thought into words: "Now I have prepared with all my might, for the *house of my God*, the gold . . . and the silver . . . and the brass, . . . iron, . . . wood, . . . and onyx stones, and stones like alabaster, . . . and all manner of precious stones, and marble of Paros, all this store that we have prepared . . . is from Thy hand; and all things are Thine." *

* 1 Par. xxix, 2-16.

The thought which we are developing explains the feeling, which we Catholics cannot express in words, which invariably comes upon us when we visit our once Catholic cathedrals and fair collegiate churches, which have ceased to fulfil their high vocation—the death-like coldness, the clammy dampness, the empty glory of our once consecrated, but now desecrated, houses of God. How empty they seem to us Catholics, like a house from which the tenant has gone and from which, consequently, the furniture —the altars, the tabernacles and the rest—have been removed! How cold they are! How damp they feel! How our steps echo and re-echo through the deserted aisles of the forsaken home! How musty they smell! How dismal they look, even in the brightness of a summer day! How deadly dull! Do they not recall the words of the Master spoken of the pharisees, whom He compared to "whited sepulchres, outwardly beautiful, but within [this is literally true] full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness."* Why this feeling which we experience, but which we must fail to describe? Why so cold? The Fire has gone out. "Did not our hearts burn within us as He walked with us in the way?"† He has ceased to walk with us in the way, and hence the cold chill at our hearts. Why so dark? The Light is extinguished. The Blessed Sacrament has been excommunicated. "The Light for the revelation of the Gentiles" has ceased to be the glory of Israel. He who said, "I am the Light of the world" has been bidden to depart, and now we walk "in darkness and in death's shadow." Why so dismal? The "glory has departed from Jerusalem." At the going of the King of glory, the angel courtiers departed with their King. In the desecration of Jerusalem's Temple under Antiochus, voices were heard crying through its length and its breadth, in its roof and its arches: "Let us go hence. Let us go hence. Let us go hence."

* Matt. xxiii, 27. † Luke xxiv, 32.

So was it three hundred years ago. They went thence. The buildings retained their external beauty, but they became "as whited sepulchres . . . full of dead men's bones." Why, in fine, so deadly dull? Because the soul has gone from the body—the body which was made for the soul—and has left it a cold, clammy corpse.

"Since I have begun, I will speak." The article of England's creed which in part runs thus: "Transubstantiation, or the change of the bread and wine, in the Supper of the Lord . . . is repugnant to the plain word of Scripture. . . The body of Christ is given—*only after a heavenly and spiritual manner*. . . The Body of Christ is eaten *in faith*. The sacrament was not to be reserved, carried about, lifted up, or *worshipped*,"* justifies abundantly the poverty and niggardliness, for the most part, of the churches built during the past three hundred years by those who, professing that creed, deny the doctrine of the Real Presence. During the three centuries which have just gone, many stately buildings have been raised—Houses of Parliament, Government offices, theatres, palaces, museums, monuments, halls—but Protestantism has never built—either in this land, in Germany, in America, in Switzerland, or in any land where it has prevailed—a single church which can compare in beauty of design, in gracefulness of architecture, in symmetry of proportions, in glory of detail, to the churches built of old throughout the length and breadth of this and other *then* Catholic lands. If any smaller churches have perchance, here or there, arisen which pretend to beauty, they have been built by those who coquette with the Catholic creed. When the non-Catholic with the artistic sense visits this or any other non-Catholic land, where does he look to feast his eye and feed his mind and satisfy his æsthetic soul? Where does the modern artist, the architect, the sculptor, the painter, go for inspiration? Where do the Ruskins—if there be more than one—seek the banquet of the soul?

Everybody knows; though everybody does not ask the reason why, and wait for the answer. All turn by artistic instinct, strengthened by an experience that is approved, to the churches—cathedral, monastic, collegiate or parochial—built in the good old Catholic days, when the old religion prevailed, when the old creed was the rule of man's faith. The modern churches, like the religion they symbolize, are cold, monotonous and dull. The ancient churches, built in faith and nurtured in love, are things of beauty, "a joy for ever." Blessed be Jesus in the most holy Sacrament, the Divine Architect, the Master Builder, "the Lord of the Temple," the Host at once and the Guest of men.

3. Jesus is our King; the church His palace; the sanctuary His audience chamber. Is it not fitting then that we should make the chamber of audience as beautiful as we may? That we should call to our aid the service of God's handmaidens—nature, art, science, sculpture, painting, mosaic, stone and marble, gold and silver and other precious metals—to make it, as far as we can, worthy, or at least less unworthy, of our King? "To the King of Ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen." * Here is our "honour," our "glory," our tribute of adoration and love. It is the spirit of Isaias the prophet: "The glory of Libanus shall come to thee; the fir-tree, and the box-tree and the pine-tree together to beautify the place of Thy sanctuary; and I will glorify the place of Thy feet. And the children of them that afflict Thee shall come, bowing down to Thee, and all that slandered Thee shall worship the steps of Thy feet, and shall call Thee the city of the Lord, the Sion of the Holy One of Israel. . . For brass I will bring gold, for iron I will bring silver, and for wood brass, and for stones iron." † Nothing can be too glorious for the sanctuary of our God.

* 1 Tim. i, 17. † lx.

4. Jesus is our King; the church His palace; the sanctuary His audience chamber; we are His courtiers. "Happy are Thy men, and happy Thy servants, who stand always before Thee and hear Thy wisdom!"* We are those men. We are those servants. Happy are we! "For there is no nation that has its gods so near to them as our God is near to our petitions."† Is it strange that those who are so near to Him, who stand before Him in His immediate presence, surrounding His altar, close to His throne—His ministers, His courtiers, His bodyguard, His messengers to men—should wear vestments, court-dress, even as courtiers in the close presence of the king? that they should bow their heads before Him and bend their knee? Is there anything to marvel at, believing as they do that He, their Lord and Master, is really here that they should give Him honourable and "reasonable" service—lip-service by prayer and sacred song, eye-service by gazing upon Him in adoring love, hand-service by striving for Him and working for Him with might and main, mind-service by thinking of Him and for Him, heart-service by loving Him, soul-service by worshipping and adoring Him? "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and benediction!"‡ "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive honour, and glory, and power; because Thou hast created all things; and for Thy will they were and have been created."§

Is it to be wondered at that their hearts should overflow with grateful love, and that love should be seen in the eye, heard in the word, manifested in exterior worship, evidenced in external cult? Is there anything unreasonable—is it not reasonable—that they should offer Him gifts, that they should pay Him their tax, that they should offer sacrifice of their substance to Him, even as they give to Him

* 3 Kings x, 8. † Deut. iv, 7. ‡ Apoc. v, 12. § Apoc. iv, 11.

the allegiance of their hearts and the interior worship of their wills? We give all this to a monarch of earth, and no one says us nay. We dare not refuse this tribute of our subjection and of His sovereignty. When the people refused to pay tribute to King Saul, they were called "children of Belial."* What shall we be called, what shall we be, if we refuse to offer presents to our King? We gladly offer gifts, as we cry out with Ethai, David's captain, "As the Lord liveth, and as my lord the king liveth, in whatsoever place thou shalt be, lord my king, either in death, or in life, there will thy servant be."†

5. Yes; He is the Lord, the King, the Master. Our ritualistic service is our outward worship of Him. With this thought before our eyes, how natural it all seems. Take the High Mass, the central service, with the washing of the hands to show how clean our soul should be when we approach the service of the All Fair; the putting on of the vestments before we come into the immediate presence of our King; the Confession with which the Mass begins, the *Confiteor* said with body bent and head bowed low in humble sorrow for sin; the *Kyrie eleison*, or "Lord, have mercy," the humble prayer for pardon; the *Gloria*, in which we praise, and bless, and adore Him; the *Epistle*, telling of hope and promise; the *Gospel*, proclaiming our faith in the words He spoke, the sermons He preached, the miracles He wrought, the life He lived, the passion He suffered, the death He died; the *Credo*, in which we profess our belief in Father, Son and Holy Ghost, in the mysteries of Incarnation, Redemption and future rewards, in the prayer of Saints, in the resurrection of the dead and life everlasting. Amen; the *Preface*, in which we call upon angels and archangels to help us in our "sacrifice of praise"; the *Sanctus*, in which, with the heavenly choir, we cry, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts!" then the *Con-*

* 1 Kings x, 27. † 2 Kings xv, 21.

secration, in which the mysterious words are spoken by which the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Jesus; the *Elevation*, when we look up in adoration, and He looks down in love; the *Pater*, in which we pray to Him, in His own words, for all we need; the *Agnus Dei*, when, before receiving Him, we again ask pardon for sin; the *Communion*, in which the receiver becomes a holy temple, a living ciborium of the living God; the *Post-Communion* of thanksgiving for the great favour received; followed by the *Ite, Missa est* of dismissal, and the *Deo gratias* of gratitude for the privilege of assisting at a rite so glorious and sublime; then the *last Gospel*, in which we renew our faith—and the highest, the noblest, the most liturgical and ritualistic ceremony of the Catholic Church is at an end. Running through the service, from end to end, we have the music to raise our thoughts heavenwards, and our hearts homewards, and our souls to Him from whom they came, to whom they return, to whom they appertain. How beautiful, too, in its simplicity and simple in its beauty the daily *Low Mass*, as it is called. Though shorn of much exterior ceremony, how glorious and sublime. You who remember Cardinal Newman's exquisite description need no words of mine.* The simple Benediction service, once more whose beauty has been eloquently described by the same graceful pen†—how familiar! Yet though of frequent occurrence, its beauty is ever new. The Divine Office again recited chorally every day in this Cathedral Church, the daily sacrifice of prayer and praise amidst an unbelieving people, in an incredulous age, in the centre of the abyssal wickedness of this Babylon of the world, the intercession of the ministers "between altar and people," the prayer of the Church for the

* *Loss and Gain*, p. 290; quoted in *The Catholic Creed*, p. 250.

† Lecture VI on *Present Position of Catholics in England;* quoted in *The Catholic Creed*, p. 326.

world, the echo on earth of the voices of the four and twenty ancients and the four living creatures in heaven. The Stations of the Cross, the recitation of the Rosary, the processions with which you are familiar, the various and varied services of the Church—all, all, all begin with, centre around, lead to and terminate in the "One that sitteth on the throne." He is the centre, the secret, the explanation of our ritual. We may end with an inspired word. "We shall say much, and yet shall want words: but the sum of our words is, HE IS ALL. What shall we be able to do to glorify Him? For the Almighty is above all His works."* May I add just another word, again a word of inspiration? "Thine, O Lord, is magnificence, and power, and glory, and victory; and to Thee is praise; for all that is in heaven and on earth is Thine; Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art above all princes. Thine are riches, and Thine is glory; Thou hast dominion over all; in Thy hand there is power and might; in Thy hand greatness, and the empire of all things. Now, therefore, O God, our God, we give thanks to Thee, and we praise Thy glorious name." †

V

The Development of Ritual

Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building, framed together, *groweth* into a holy temple in the Lord.—*Eph.* 11, 20.

THAT growth is development. The foundation remains; the chief corner-stone is unchanged; yet the superstructure grows, and becomes "a holy temple in the Lord." The Church, with her creed and its evidences, rests upon the prophets and upon the Apostles, upon Jesus Christ as the chief corner-

* Ecclus xliii. 29, 30. † 1 Par. xxix, 11, 13.

stone. Whilst retaining and resting upon this solid foundation, it suffers no essential, no fundamental change, and yet it does not stand still; it grows, it develops, it comes to maturity. The foundation remains a foundation and the same foundation; it is firm and immovable; but stone is added to stone, and upon the unmoved foundation there rises a holy temple. The growth is accidental, not essential. The Church, remaining the same Church, changes, not in her doctrine, not in her creed, but in the external manifestation, in the development of doctrine and creed.

Some people are apt, too apt, to take as their standard of perfection, the remote past. They are accustomed to appeal to the primitive Church with its primitive practices. They seem to think that the Church, of all things on earth must stand still; that she must remain stagnant in an ever moving, perpetually changing, unceasingly progressive world. "It was so, or it was not so, in the early ages, in primitive Christian times, in apostolic days," they say; then they conclude, triumphantly, "so should it be now." An illogical conclusion, indeed, utterly unworthy of a reasonable and reasoning man! As applied to doctrine, the reasoning is sound enough, for truth is ever the same. Truth, like the God of truth, is "yesterday, to-day and the same for ever": truth is eternal. But in the outward evidences, the external manifestations, the accidental development of the unvarying and changeless truth, there must ever be liability to change. It is bootless to measure present-day circumstances by the standard of nineteen or twenty centuries ago.

Even as the Lollards—the Socialists of the fourteenth century, who would have levelled all the classes and fused them into the masses—were accustomed to appeal to the Garden of Eden, and repeat, as though in conclusive triumph, the well-worn couplet,

When Adam delved and Eve span,
Who was then the gentleman?

so do our Christian Socialists, the Lollards of to-day, appeal to the Eden of Christianity, to the days and ways of Jesus and the apostles; so do they ask, "Why are not we and ours exactly and precisely as were they and theirs?" The answer is, because, where there is life there must be growth; stagnation spells death. "God is the God of the living and not of the dead."* There has always been a law of development or growth in the social, the moral, and the spiritual world. "When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?" If the question were not serious, we might answer that Cain and Abel were then the gentlemen. After them Henoch, Cain's son, of whom we read that later "he built a city"; then *his* son, Henoch, after whom the city was named. At first, from stress of circumstances, there was no one else to play the rôle of gentleman. But as the command, "Increase and multiply and fill the earth," bore abundant fruit, and as, consequently, humanity grew and society increased, there came moral and social development with the material and numerical growth. Refinement, culture, civilization—such as then existed—did their work, and their apt pupils became gentlemen and gentlewomen; whilst those who could not, or would not, be refined, remained clods, delvers and spinners, "hewers of stone and drawers of water."

This is the answer to the anti-Ritualists who would level everything down to primitive Christianity; this the reply to those who say, "Why have glorious churches and graceful ritual and soul-stirring music in the Church?" and who give, as the reason of their objection, that such things were not at Bethlehem, at Nazareth, on Calvary, or even in apostolic days.

First of all we may ask, "Is it true that they had no ritual in primitive Christian days?" It was a modi-

*Mark xii, 27.

fied ritual, no doubt, a simple ceremonial, primitive if you will, in keeping with the circumstances of primitive times; still there was ritual, if only in embryo. Did not angels sing at Bethlehem? Did not shepherds come down in procession from the hills around? Did not wise men journey thither on pilgrimage from the East; and is it not on record that they "fell down and adored," that they "offered gifts—gold, frankincense and myrrh"? The adoration of the Magi is a theme beloved of Christian artists, the subject of much artistic inspiration. What about the ritual of Thabor, of which we have already spoken?* The sublime ritual of Calvary—the quaking of the earth, the darkening of the sun, the rending of the veil, the voice of Longinus? What of the ceremonial at the coming down of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost—the sound from heaven, the mighty wind, the tongues of fire, the divers tongues? What, once more, of the relics, the altar tombs, the frescoes, the representations of vestments, the lamps, still found, or but recently discovered, in the Catacombs?† All these are evidences, if evidence be needed, of ritual and ceremonial in early Christian times.

Even were it not so, were there no traces of ritual in early days, even were it beyond doubt that no ceremonial prevailed in apostolic times—what then? Do you leave no room for development, for improvement, for expansion? "The path of the just, as a shining light, goeth forward and increaseth even to perfect day."‡ In the times of which we are speaking the ruler of England was a half-naked savage; the people of England were rude, rough, uncouth barbarians, living in huts and mud cabins—earlier still without even huts or cabins of mud—feeding with their fingers, eating as pigs from a trough. Would

*Page 21.

†The reader is referred to such books as *The Roman Catacombs* and *Roma Sotteranea* by the Very Rev. Dr Northcote, and *Hierurgia* by Dr Rock.

‡Prov. iv, 18.

you have your king a half-naked savage to-day? Would you have the people of England go back to the ways and lives of their primeval fathers, to the huts, and to the cabins, and to the troughs? No. Be consistent, then, and do not expect Christians to put the clock back, and return to early days and early ways in matters non-essential.

Development is a law of divine Providence. His works are intended to grow. First they are as the *nubecula*, the little cloud coming out of the sea, in the vision of the prophet's servant, "the size of a man's foot"; but they expand, they develop till the heavens are filled with clouds. "And while he turned this way and that way, behold, the heavens grew dark with clouds."* We see this in nature. In the heavens the sun rises, as it seems to us and according to our way of thought and speech; it *grows* gradually, till it culminates in its meridian splendour. In the earth the tiny seed stretches out its little tendrils, forces its way above the ground, and develops into a tree. In the world of men, the embryo becomes a babe a span long, the babe a span long becomes a child, the child grows into a youth, the youth develops into a man. The tree is in the seed, the oak is in the acorn, but as yet it is not delevoped; the man is in the babe, nay in the embryo, but lacks development. The man is the development of the embryo; the tree the development of the seed. St Paul bears witness to development in human life. "When I was a child, I spoke as a child; I understood as a child; I thought as a child. But when I became a man I put away the things of a child."† Human society is in a perennial state of development. How different the manners and customs of to-day from the manners and customs of the days when Cæsar conquered our land! How different the court and courtiers and court ceremonial of our day, from those of the heptarchy, or of William the Con-

* 3 Kings xxiii. † 1 Cor. xiii, 11.

queror's time. It is our proud boast that the Church is *semper eadem*, unchanging and unchangeable. Yet it grows and develops in its outer life. The Prophet foretold it under the form of a little stone, "cut out of a rock without hands," which became a great mountain; our Lord compared it to a little grain of mustard-seed growing into the size of a tree; and St Paul in the text speaks of it "growing into a holy temple." The Church is always the same essentially —in her creed, her doctrines, her hierarchic government—but she grows accidently in her outward form and development. Truth never changes, but it has a legitimate accidental growth which does not imply substantial change. The tree remains a tree and the same tree; but its leaves, its branches, its blossoms, its fruits, it external appearance change with the seasons. This is so with doctrine, in its accidental growth and development. The law of charity is eternal, yet our Lord tells of its growth. "You have heard that it was said to them of old, 'Thou shalt not kill'"—there is the law of charity. But see the development, "But I say to you whosoever is angry with his brother shall be guilty of the judgement."* Here is the development of fraternal love. Again we have the development of the canon of sanctity, "Unless your justice *exceeds* those of the scribes and pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."† St Peter, in his second epistle, says, "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."‡ St Paul writes to the Colossians, "Being fruitful in good works and *increasing* in the knowledge of God,"§ and to the Thessalonians, "Forgetting the things that are behind, I stretch forward to the things that are before."‖ This is apostolic progress, development, growth. It is the development of faith and morality, not the change. To Vincent of Lerins we owe this definition,

* Matt. v, 22. † Ibid. 20. ‡ iii, 18.
§ i, 10. ‖ iii, 13.

"*Profectus fidei non permutatio*," which means, "the development of faith, not the change."

"Some one may ask me [he writes], 'Is there no development (*profectus*) of religion in the Church of Christ?' Certainly, the greatest. Where is the man so malicious to his fellow-men, so hateful to God, as to endeavour to forbid this? But the development must be such as not to imply a change of faith. Development means the expansion of the same substance; change entails the transmutation of one thing into another. There must be expansion and development in everything, human and ecclesiastical; development in knowledge, science and wisdom, according to different times; but it must only be in its own kind (*genere*), i.e., in the same dogma, the same sense, the same judgement. The religion of souls must follow a rule common to it and to the body. The body, in the course of time, develops and expands in its members, yet it remains always the *same* body. . . Religion follows this same law of progress. It is strengthened and it expands in the course of years; yet it remains unchanged and unimpaired."*

Two or three instances of this *profectus fidei non permutatio* suggest themselves. Devotion to the Sacred Heart is not a new doctrinal practice; it is the legitimate development of the definition of our Lord's divinity at Nice in the year 325, and at Ephesus in the year 431; it is the logical sequence of St John's saying, "The Word was made Flesh"; it is the natural outcome of faith in the Incarnation. Another instance of development is devotion to the ever-blessed Mary. That devotion is the practical commentary on the words coming to us from Bethlehem and Calvary. "Mary brought forth her first-born Son."† "Son, behold Thy Mother."‡ A third instance of doctrinal development is the definition in

* Commonit. 1, n. xxiii, p. 667, edit. Migne.
† Luke ii, 7. ‡ John xix, 27.

1870 of Papal Infallibility, a doctrine to be found implicitly and radically in the words of Jesus Christ, "Thou art Peter," etc.* "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and thou, being converted, confirm thy brethren."† Those of you who are familiar with the late Cardinal Newman's *Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, will remember that he traces various doctrines through the ages—our Lord's Divinity, Papal Supremacy, Pardons, Penances, Purgatory, Devotion to Mary. Then he sums it all up in the words: "Doctrine is where it was. . . There may be changes, but they are consolidations and adaptations. . . Change she cannot. . . Change she never will."‡ Lawful development is not change. *Profectus fidei, non permutatio.*

Now, you see to what I am leading you. As there is development in doctrine, development in worship, there must be development in ritual, the Church's expression of doctrine and cult; there must be development in our attitude towards the developed truth, i.e., in our rites and ceremonies.

It would be intensely interesting to trace this progress, or development of ritual, through the Christian ages, but in the few decades of minutes allowed to our words, it is impossible to do more than refer to it. There is development in art; so must there be in Christian symbols—in pictures, in sculpture, in carving and painting. The rude frescoes of the Catacombs have given place to the glories of the Middle Ages and to the exquisite art reproductions of today. There is development in architecture; so must there be in ecclesiastical buildings, in holy places, in sanctuaries, in chapels, in shrines. There is development in music, the trained language of sounds; hence the crude hymns of the catacombs (of which mention is made in the Acts of the Martyrs), have gone down before the chaste, refined strains to which we have listened this morning. Civilization has in-

* Matt. xvi. † Luke xxii. ‡ p. 452, Edit. London, 1845.

troduced higher standards, nobler ideals. These ideals that are higher must make their way into the Church services. The Church must be abreast of the times. As the flickering rush candle has been superseded in our churches by gas or electric light, and as we no longer come to worship in the rumbling stage coach, which has given place to the steam engine, the electric power and the motor-car, so, even in ecclesiastical externals of worship, old methods must make way for new. A wise "master of a house bringeth forth out of his treasure old things and new."* The Church is the wise master. She brings forth new practices, new rites, new ceremonies, new developments, whilst retaining the old doctrines and the old creeds.

We see this in her material churches. Christian architecture has been called "*la pensée chrétienne batie* —Christian thought written in stone." Hence, as Christian thought expanded, developed, made progress, Christian churches also advanced. In the days of the ancient patriarchs there were no churches. The world was "the big Church of God," with the heavens studded with stars as its frescoed roof, the sun and moon as its sanctuary lamps, the green grass as its carpet, the trees its adornments, the hills its altars, the fathers of families its priests. On these altars the patriarchs and prophets—Abel, Melchisedech of Salem, Abraham, Elias and the others —offered sacrifice to God under the canopy of heaven, with the ritual and music of earth. Then, when sin had defiled the earth, and even the waters of the flood had failed to cleanse the stain and the fire of Sodom to purify it, or the stain when cleansed was renewed, special spots were chosen and sanctified and dedicated to divine worship—Bethel by Jacob, Carmel by Elias. Then we come to buildings. First we find only a tabernacle of skins; it is called "a tent."† Development continues. Moses builds a

* Matt. xiii, 52. † 2 Kings vii.

house of God "according to the pattern shown on the Mount."* truly a "ritualistic Church" with ornaments of silver and gold, and brass, and precious woods and stones. David wished to build a temple to the Most High, but was not allowed. It was reserved to his son, Solomon, to raise a truly magnificent fane. The Scripture account of the progress of the building and its dedication to the service of God reads like a ritualistic romance. It was "a thing of beauty, the wonder of the entire world." We afterwards read of the Temple of Zorobabel, twice the size of Solomon's great fane. This was succeeded by the one called after Herod, greater than either of the former two, of beautiful white marble exquisitely wrought, adorned with all the magnificence possible to the times. Josephus compares it to the sun, dazzling to the sight and overpowering to the naked eye. This was the Temple wherein, as our Lord predicted, Jewish ceremonial was to come to an end. For of it "not a stone was left upon a stone."

We see here the development of Jewish ritual as evidenced in what we may call ecclesiastical architecture. First, no church at all, only the field, the hilltop, the mountain side. Then, perhaps, a house or a barn. Then a tabernacle or tent of skins, superseded by a greater tabernacle. Later a temple; then a greater temple more magnificent; finally, a more glorious one still.

It has been so in Christian times. Bethlehem with a stable for the first church, a crib for the altar, straw for its covering, a rude lantern for the lamp. Then the cottage chapel at Nazareth, the despised village from which nothing good, it was said, could come. Later the upper chamber—"*stratum et paratum*—fittingly prepared," where the first Mass was said, and that other chamber where the Holy Ghost came down upon the little flock which was to be-

* Exod. xxv, xxvi.

come a kingdom. In apostolic times and after, for three centuries, Christianity was proscribed, Christians were under a ban. How could there be gorgeous celebrations and glittering ritual and glorious ceremonial, when for Christians it was death to be seen, to be heard, to be known as existing? Absence of ritual came not from disregard of rites and ceremonies, but from stress of circumstance beyond control. Even in our own land, have we not had, even in comparatively recent years, to say Mass where we could, in public houses, in cellars, in garrets, in barns? Do you infer from this that we despised ritual, and did not set any store by the ceremonial of the Church? So in the early days of Christian times, when men had to hide in catacombs, and say Mass on the tombs of martyrs, when poverty was their endowment and persecution their legacy, when they had to meet in the early dawn, and perhaps in the evening die, where was there chance or hope of ritual? Why then appeal to the simplicity of early times against the ritual of to-day? Show that they could have been ritualistic and would not be; that their simplicity of worship came from choice and not from dire necessity, and then—but not till then—the argument may avail.

No sooner had the cross of Constantine appeared, and the fires been extinguished, and the prisons been closed; no sooner were Catholics permitted to live in the light of day, than, with their resurrection, ritual arose in glorious splendour of pageantry, and ceremony, and gorgeous ceremonial. Pagan temples were converted into Christian churches; other churches sprang up, culminating, later, in the splendour of monastic shrines, and glorious cathedrals of which so many remain to us in England, in their ivy-covered ruins or in their pristine beauty, to this day—monuments, sermons in stone, telling of the love of our fathers for the glory of ritual. As of churches, so of altars. We can trace their develop-

ment from the stone which had been Jacob's pillow at Bethel, and which was anointed with oil, to the altar of earth used by Moses or the altar of unpolished stones of Samuel, Saul and David, to the glorious altar of the oracle covered with gold in Solomon's superb Temple. Then in Christian times from the crib in the stable to the table in the chamber, and the altar of which St Paul writes to the Hebrews.* and the "one altar of every church" spoken of by Ignatius the Martyr, "the altar, the seat of the Body and Blood," of the fourth century, the altar of which St John Chrysostom writes that "it is indeed of stone, but it becomes holy after it receives the Body of Christ"—down to the altars of the Middle Ages which speak for themselves to this day, and our own altars, so rich, so expressive in their symbolism, of the sacrifice of the Lamb that was slain.

From churches and altars we come to the liturgical services of the Church and their gradual development in Christendom. Liturgy perpetuates dogma. When we read the ancient liturgies, we know that we are one in our creed with our fathers in the ancient days. Take the chief act of the Church's liturgy, the sublime Sacrifice of the Mass. "He who runs may read" that we are one with the early ages in our faith, from our oneness with them in the external profession of our creed. Yet, in the course of time, with progress in architecture, fine arts, civilization and refinement, the ritual of the Church which depends upon these as the mistress upon her handmaiden, has developed with their advancement. How simple the ritual of the first Mass in the upper chamber on the eve of the Passion, with the raising of the eyes to heaven, the blessing, the breaking of the bread, the sublime words of mysterious power, "This is My Body," and the other words of vicarious commission, "Do this

* xiii, 10.

in commemoration of Me," and the singing of the hymn. It was rubrical, but how simple the ceremonial, as recorded in the synoptic Gospels. These simple rubrics have all been preserved to this day. The priest still raises his eyes, and blesses, and breaks the bread, and says the selfsame words; but other ceremonies have been added to these; they have developed with time. Thus, in apostolic days we read that, during the celebration of Mass, there was "a great number of lamps in the upper chamber where they were assembled."* And St Paul enjoins that "all things be done decently and in order."† In the second century, St Irenaeus, referring to the ceremonies which St John witnessed in heaven, the golden candlesticks, the ancients in white garments, the harps, the canticles, the censer and the incense, says: "The liturgy of the Holy Sacrifice [or the Mass] must have been modelled according to the vision of that favourite disciple of our Lord."‡ St Justin, writing in the same age, also shows the gradual development of the ritual of the Mass, writing as a Catholic apologist might write in our times. You will have noticed this morning some of the ceremonies he describes eighteen centuries ago: "Our prayers being finished, we embrace each other with the kiss of peace. Then to him who presides over the brethren is presented bread, and wine tempered with water; having received which he gives glory to the Father of all things, in the name of the Son and the Holy Ghost, and returns thanks in many prayers. . . . This food we call the Eucharist . . . [it] is the Flesh and Blood of Jesus incarnate."§ St Cyril of Jerusalem continues the history of the development two centuries later in the twenty-second of his catechetical lectures. And two centuries later we read of it here in England in the days of our apostle St Augustine, and we note how the ritual, beginning

* Acts xx, 8. † 1 Cor. xiv, 40.
‡ Advers. Hæres. lib. IV, c. xvii. § In Apol. II.

so simply when the first Mass was said, and progressing so gradually in the apostles' day, gets nearer to the ritual as practised in this church this morning. St Cyril, in the lecture referred to, speaks most definitely of the doctrine of the Mass. Of St Augustine we are told that he said Mass in the Church of St Martin at Canterbury; we are told too how it was said, namely, with "sacred vessels, altar plate, altar coverings, ornaments for the church, priestly and other clerical vestments" sent by Pope St Gregory the Great from the holy city of Rome.* St Cyril, in the lecture following the one just cited, speaks of the ceremonies of the Mass, of the deacon giving the priest water to wash his hands, of the psalm *Lavabo* said to this day; of the *Pax*, the *Sursum corda*, the *Gratias agamus;* then the *Preface*, though he does not call it by that name; the *Sanctus*, the prayer of consecration, prayers following for the living and the dead; the *Pater*, as in our ritual to-day. Even Henry VIII bears witness to the development, leaving orders in his last testament, or will, for "a convenient altar properly prepared and apparelled with all manner of things necessary for daily Mass there to be said perpetually as the long as the world shall endure."

The development in the use of vestments may be studied in the Catacombs rudely written in stone, and in later ages painted on glass and frescoed on walls. The very sign of the cross, so constantly forming part of our rites, has its own history. Tertullian in the third century bears witness to its use: "At every step . . . when we go in and out, at the baths, when we go to bed, whatever we do, we sign ourselves with the cross."† St Chrysostom, in the fifth century, writes of its being "employed specially at the holy table;" Not half a century later, St Augustine tells of its being applied to the brows of the faithful in baptism; of the anointing with chrism

* Ven. Bede, Hist. lxxv, et seq. †De Corona, 3.

the saint adds that "without it, these rites would not be properly performed."* The holy water we can trace from Mosaic times, when "the water of aspersion was sprinkled,"† to early Christian days when the faithful washed their hands in it in the porch of the church; thence to Pope Alexander, the sixth in succession to St Peter, who, by decree, allowed the people to carry holy water to their homes and to the Catacombs, where we find representations of holy water vases and sprinkling brushes;‡ then through the ages of faith and unfaith, down to this believing and unbelieving age, to this land, to this very church, where you will find holy water still at the door. Incense, needless to remind you, had its place in Jewish worship, in Solomon's Temple, in the days of our Lord;§ it is prescribed in early Church liturgies; and its use is recorded in heaven.

Through the ages we trace the development of ritual. If here and there we fail to find records of it, at this time or that, in the perfection in which we have it to-day, we must bear in mind the poverty, the simplicity of the early Christian times, the variety of customs in one land and in another, the progress of science and arts, the varied phases of life in different lands, the development of doctrine, the outgrowth of truth; and this will explain much that else seems inexplicable.

Truth expands as a tree; so, consequently, does ritual. Doctrine makes progress, not by change in substance, but by accidental development—so must ceremonial. As Christianity enters more deeply into the hearts, the minds, the lives of men, so it develops greater outward pomp, more exterior worship, more ceremonious demonstration of faith, hope and love.

Ritual develops. It must, it will, till it reaches the highest development of all, till "it increases unto

*Hom. cxviii in Joan. †Numb. xix.
‡See books referred to on page 57. §Luke 1.

perfect day." What is that? Where? When? When the veil shall be drawn, when the shadows shall flee, when clouds shall be lifted, when scales shall fall from our eyes, when we shall see as we are seen, when we shall know as we are known. The ritual of heaven is ritual in its highest and most perfect development. St John opens the gates of the heavenly city, not widely—this may not be—but just sufficiently to give us a glimpse, that we may have a faint forecast of that which eye cannot see, nor ear hear, nor mind understand. Through the half-opened door we catch a passing, fleeting glance—but only in a dark manner—of the great cathedral of God above, with its golden candlesticks, its "ancients clothed in white garments," its "angels with censers," its "golden altar which is before the throne of God." We hear the music of the waters, and of the harpers harping upon the harps, and the canticle and the song. We see, but only as the people saw Moses, with veiled face, Him who is the centre of ritual on earth and in heaven, the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end" of all ritual, "the Son of Man, clothed with a white garment down to His feet" and "girt with a golden girdle," the Son of the eternal God, "the King of Ages, the invisible, the immortal, the only God, to whom be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

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